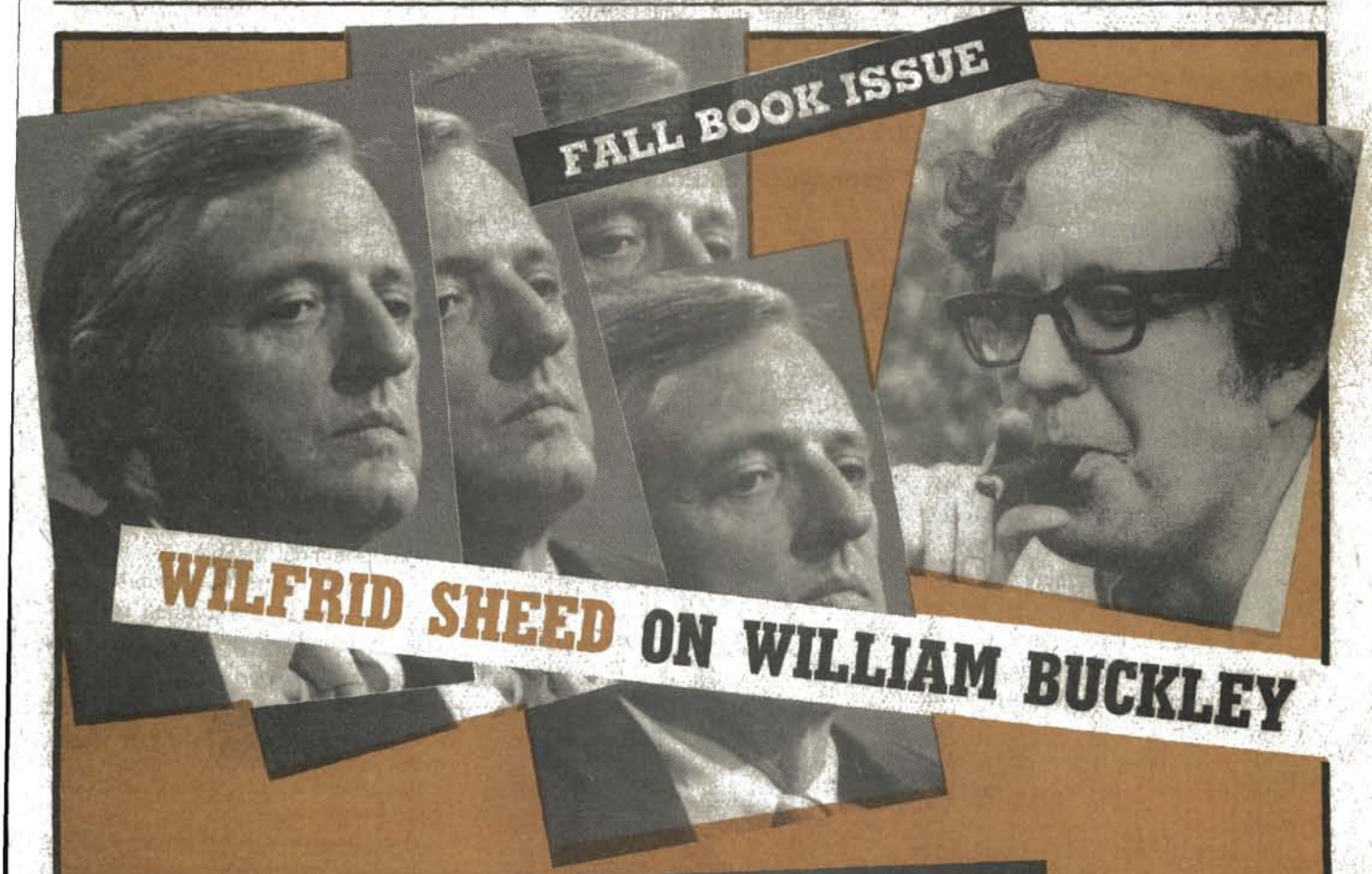
St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio
#0079978N #005 8812
ST CHARLES SEM LIB
CARTHAGENA STA
CELINA OH 45822

$1.50

er 4, 1988

COMMO AL



FALL BOOK ISSUE

WILFRID SHEED ON WILLIAM BUCKLEY

Walter H. Clark, Jr. on J.F. POWERS

Dennis P. McCann on GUSTAVO GUTIERREZ

Eavan Boland on MARIE PONSOT

Christopher Vecsey on LOUISE ERDRICH

Arthur Moore on RICHARD GOODWIN

Peggy Ellsberg on JAMAICA KINCAID

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Locker-room poetry

Notre Dame, Ind.

To the Editors: The poem, "Ballad of Male Hegemony," by Clare Will Faulhaber [September 9] hits below the belt. This is locker-room talk. If a man wrote such an uncouth poem about women, the magazine would not print it.

I enjoy *Commonweal* very much. The article by John Baldovin and the discussion of *The Last Temptation of Christ* in the same issue of the magazine were especially helpful and interesting.

NICHOLAS AYO

'The Last Temptation'

Wilmington, Del.

To the Editors: I eagerly awaited the early September issue of *Commonweal* because I was sure that Tom O'Brien would review *The Last Temptation of Christ*. I was happy to discover there were two other articles included as well: Kelly's interview with Martin Scorsese, the film director, and Scheper's review of Kazantzakis's novel, upon which the film is based.

After reading the three articles and viewing the film, I would like to ask a few questions:

How many Hollywood directors today would dare to spend their time and money to do a major film on the life of Jesus?

How many current film directors are willing to share their intimate, religious thoughts, however one might agree or disagree with them, about a subject so personal and controversial?

How many filmgoers, regardless of their religious views, may enjoy a film that challenges them to wrestle with basic religious questions about Jesus and themselves?

How many films invite viewers into an ever-familiar world that is uniquely unfamiliar because it welcomes them into one man's cinematic understanding of the Man/God, Jesus?

How different would the world be if Jew and Gentile alike could view *The Last Temptation*, as an artist's interpretation of what it meant for him that God became man in the Jesus form?

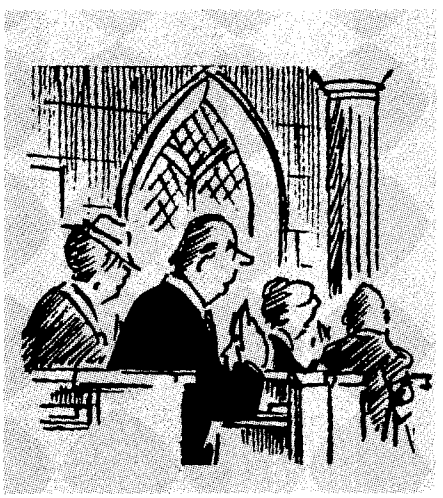
I continue to be enriched by what I read in *Commonweal*.

JOAN ROBINSON-HOLMES, Ph.D.

Mocking Jesus & Paul

Taylor, Pa.

To The Editors: Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* demands a new dialogue between art and the church. Apparently twentieth-century art is to know no boundaries. And *Commonweal* concedes that the film and the related



"And lead us not into The Last Temptation . . ."

controversy signal "a moment for scrutinizing our own images and ideas of Jesus" ["Whose Jesus?" Sept. 23]. It seems vital to me, a Byzantine Catholic, that Christians also might examine more scrupulously the historic nature of blasphemy and mockery of Jesus Christ. Surely lies about Jesus and St. Paul should never be regarded as advantageous to a people, especially in a consumer society which often uses religious symbols for commercial ends. As the tale of the Temple money-changers demonstrates, toleration and sacred dialogue have always had rules and "human" limitations. Is today any different?

CHARLES J. ORLOSKI, JR.

Taking Jesus seriously

Stamford, Conn.

To the Editors: At last a rational analysis of *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Mary Pat Kelly seems to be well versed in the genesis of the Scorsese film ["Jesus Gets the Beat," September 9]. Scorsese describes it as "a film made to set off discussions . . . [by] people taking Jesus seriously," taking seriously his "ideas of love, loving God, loving your neighbor as yourself." If it is as he describes it, I know I will enjoy seeing the film, though it may cause one of those spiritual agonies that Kazantzakis and Scorsese and so many thinking people have suffered throughout the ages.

The same issue of *Commonweal*, however, brings a disturbing book review by John H. Wright, S.J.: *The New*

(Continued on page 605)

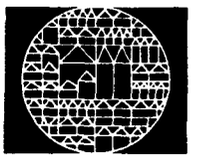
Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters should not exceed 250 words and are subject to editing for clarity and space limitations.

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, Ohio 44691. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Copyright © 1988 Commonweal Foundation. Single copy, $1.50. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $32; Canada, $34; foreign, $37. Special two-year rate: U.S., $57; Canada, $61; foreign, $67. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

Illustrations: Cover design, Emil Antonucci; p. 578, Holland, *Daily Telegraph*; p. 585, Photo courtesy, *National Review*; p. 586, Paul Valerry; p. 583, Bas., Tachydromos; p. 592, Hugh Powers.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMONWEAL



CONTENTS

Volume CXV, Number 19

Correspondence	578
Editorials	579
Defeat of a dictator: *Virginia M. Bouvier*	580
Where the kids are: *Abigail McCarthy*	581
The mind has a life, too: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*	582
William Buckley's several selves: *Wilfrid Sheed*	584
Screen: *Tom O'Brien*	588
Does anyone remember J. Blue?: *Kathy Petersen Cecala*	590

BOOKS

Wheat That Springeth Green: *Walter H. Clark, Jr.*	592
A Theology of Liberation: *Dennis P. McCann*	594
The Green Dark: *Eavan Boland*	595
Tracks: *Christopher Vecsey*	596
Libra: *Peter LaSalle*	598
Remembering America: *Arthur J. Moore*	600
A Small Place: *Peggy Ellsberg*	602

STAFF

Editor: Margaret O'Brien Steinfels
Associate Editors: David Toolan, Karen Sue Smith, Patrick Jordan
Production Editor: Anne Robertson
Poetry: Rosemary Deen
Movies: Tom O'Brien
Columnists: John Garvey, J. Bryan Hehir, Abigail McCarthy, David R. Carlin, Jr.
Staff: Harriette Balsky, Janice Gates, John A. Black
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly, except monthly Christmas-New Year's and July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 15 Dutch St., New York, N.Y. 10038. Telephone: (212) 732-0800. Display advertising correspondence should be sent to Ruth E. Taylor, 11 Graffam Rd., So. Portland, Me. 04106 (207) 799-4387, classified advertising correspondence to 15 Dutch St. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Commonweal, 15 Dutch St. New York, N.Y. 10038.

The day of reckoning

The presidential campaign has provided the electorate with a remarkably benign view of the country's condition. George Bush has no reason and, as far as we can tell, no capacity to criticize the last eight years. Michael Dukakis suspects, probably with reason, that he will win no votes spelling out the drastic measures needed to remedy those eight years of supply-side wrongs. As a result, neither candidate is trying to win by educating the electorate about the critical issues a new administration will have to confront very early in its term.

One is the economy, another is military and foreign policy, and the third involves the much-talked-about but wildly distorted question of values.

In a new book, *The Day of Reckoning* (Random House), Benjamin Friedman sums up what responsible economists, including several who have gone through the Reagan administration's revolving door, have been saying for a while: "The radical course upon which United States economic policy was launched in the 1980s violated the basic moral principle that . . . men and women should work and eat, earn and spend, both privately and collectively, so that their children and their children's children would inherit a better world. Since 1980 we have broken with that tradition by pursuing a policy that amounts to living not just in, but for, the present. We are living well by running up our debt and selling off our assets. . . . The costs, which are only beginning to come due, will include a lower standard of living . . . and reduced American influence and importance in world affairs."

The deficit is the most conspicuous symbol of our altered economic condition. The U.S. government owes over $2.5 trillion. Those who argue that this debt is relatively easy to reduce—raise taxes, spend less, and raise productivity in the private sector—fail to take account of our political inability to agree on the first two and business's failure to accomplish the third, even after eight years of deregulation. New corporate debt amounts to $726 billion. A substantial portion of this unprecedented borrowing has been misspent. Rather than investment in new productive capacities, which along with the lower dollar could help reduce the trade deficit, there have been buyouts, mergers, golden parachutes, and other forms of corporate bingeing.

As examples of a "tough-minded" foreign and military policy, Mr. Bush holds up the Mickey Mouse invasion of Grenada and the wasteful and destructive support of the Nicaraguan "freedom fighters." He ascribes our improved relations with the former evil empire to the administration's military build-up, especially NATO's deployment of Pershing and ground- launched cruise missiles, and in that he may be partially correct. But much of the Soviet government's change in policy is not our doing and not under our control. We are radically unprepared to deal with its changing foreign policy and the pressure-cooker atmosphere developing in Eastern

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Europe. Forty years of Cold War thinking has eroded our capacity for flexible and pragmatic responses to what will be among the biggest foreign and military policy questions we have ever faced: How will we respond to a Soviet government groping for credibility and prosperity? If it's successful? Or worse, if it's not?

And what of U.S. allies? We treat the peace efforts of the Central American presidents with disdain. We encourage Japan to remilitarize instead of supporting their recent, tentative steps toward fostering third-world development. We nourish Israeli intransigence toward the Palestinians with a flow of blank checks. In all of these areas, the next administration will face a daunting task: the reorientation of American policy from domination and rigidity toward partnership and flexibility.

As to values, everyone has embraced the cause of the family, but to what end? It allows Mr. Bush to avoid talking about the values a government really has the capacity to foster—above all, maintaining a sense of trust between itself and its citizens. That means having the guts to tell the truth about the Reagan government and its policies, about the economic state of the nation, and about the positions of its political opponents so as to engage them in genuine debate. Mr. Bush has done nothing to relieve honest concerns on the first two points and has vulgarized Mr. Dukakis's views precisely to avoid a genuine confrontation. Mr. Dukakis, though embracing liberal values in social and cultural matters, has done little to defend them either passionately or rationally before a skeptical electorate.

Our politicians have taken the lead in depoliticizing the electorate; their campaigns have not even addressed much less illuminated the precarious future the country faces. They have been aided and abetted by TV cameras that prefer cheap shots to matters of substance. This kind of electioneering creates a temptation to withdraw, to opt out, to say "a pox on both your houses." It is a deadly temptation: giving way to it could lead to a still darker, still meaner brand of politics in this country, particularly at that not too distant time when the bills for the Reagan revolution start falling due.

REPORT FROM CHILE

DEFEAT OF A DICTATOR

WHY PINOCHET GOT THE NO

The votes are in and the dictator lost by 43 percent to 55 percent. Nonetheless, Chilean spin specialists are trying to portray General Augusto Pinochet's defeat in the October 5 plebiscite as a victory. On national television, Interior Minister Sergio Fernandez proclaimed, "The immense majority of Chileans are with the president. The rest of the votes must be divided by sixteen, because the "Command for the No-Vote" included sixteen parties. . . . No Chilean political sector has the support that President Pinochet enjoys now."

But General Pinochet's military math did not work at the polls. Although he secured a surprising two-fifths of the vote, the general had pulled out the stops and failed to get enough votes to continue as president for eight more years. He thought he would win. It was, after all, his show. His government enjoyed a near monopoly on media, especially television, which allowed it to discredit opposition leaders, frighten viewers about a return to a dark and violent past, and publicize as real growth Chile's economic recovery from a depression in the early 1980s.

As if its aggressive public relations campaign were not enough, inducements and fear were a major part of Pinochet's campaign, particularly in small rural communities. On the one hand, local authorities made no bones about lobbying openly for the "Yes" campaign—buying votes with offers of free gifts, such as rice, sugar, lodgings, transportation, and even free medical care. On the other hand, fifteen years of persistent human rights violations, even during the campaign, should have quieted the dictator's opponents. In addition, military and municipal authorities threatened to lay off "No" supporters from their jobs and take away their housing and food subsidies. These threats were not idle. Ricardo Lagos, head of the opposition Party for Democracy, told members of a delegation in which I participated that dozens of unionists were summarily fired after they attended a "No" rally in a small northern town.

Given all of the above factors, why then did Pinochet fail to secure a majority? The government appears to have miscalculated on a number of fronts. First, it flaunted a bit too heavily an economic recovery which most Chileans feel has yet to benefit them personally. In addition, the paternalistic nature of government housing and assistance programs was often humiliating and inappropriate for recipients who were accustomed to greater participation in program design and implementation. Accordingly, the "No" achieved its strongest support (around 70 percent) in the poor neighborhoods of Santiago. Polling data from the progovernment Center for Public Studies shows that 72 percent of the "No" voters were motivated by economic factors; 39 percent by concern over human-rights violations.

Second, the government's monopoly of the media for the past fifteen years may have hit the saturation point, detracting from its effectiveness during the campaign period. The opposition, allotted less than seven hours' television time during the campaign, countered much of the government's propaganda with its own upbeat spots. Just over half of the women voters—a key target audience for the television campaigns—opted for the "No," contrary to the government's expectation that it had the women's vote in the bag.

Third, the government discounted the opposition's ability to present a united front. Sixteen political parties, representing a wide spectrum of views, united to call for Pinochet's defeat at the polls. The Communist party reversed an earlier decision to boycott the general's stacked deck and was also campaigning

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for a "No" vote. Two small, armed guerrilla groups had declared a truce until after the referendum.

Fourth, opposition efforts to convince voters that their ballots would be secret may have undercut threats and inducements by local government authorities, especially prevalent in the rural areas. Ten of Chile's twelve largely rural regions, including the heavily militarized southern zone of Coyhaique, gave majorities to the "No" vote. Only in the ninth region of Araucania did the "Yes" win decisively; in the neighboring region of Aysen, the "Yes" squeaked by with a 49 percent to 48 percent lead.

Finally, the unprecedented voter turnout rate of 97 percent suggests that, even after fifteen years, Chileans place a high value on electoral participation. Chileans used the plebiscite as an opportunity to turn a fragile mechanism designed to prolong and legitimize an anachronistic dictatorship into an expression of popular will.

Minister Fernandez's reminder that the opposition vote should be divided by sixteen has its ironic twist. The No coalition has reached consensus on many key issues, while the "Yes" campaign is on the threshold of crisis. On October 14, leaders of the sixteen parties which formed the "No" campaign agreed to name a single presidential candidate in the multicandidate presidential and congressional elections to be held before December 1989. The three major parties which supported Pinochet in the plebiscite, however, have split with the dictator and are calling for a new consensus candidate on the right. If Pinochet insists on being the presidential candidate, the right may present several candidates, in which case the presidency would be decided in a runoff, probably in the opposition's favor. Some sectors of the right are also calling for the resignation of Fernandez, who headed the "Yes" campaign. One such Pinochet supporter reportedly was approached to assume Fernandez's post, but declined when Pinochet told him he would not tolerate negotiations with the opposition.

A return to Chile's democratic traditions is by no means secure. The 1980 Constitution assures Pinochet and the military an ongoing role in national politics beyond the anticipated 1989 elections. Yet the "No" win may well have undercut Pinochet's civilian support base enough to secure some constitutional and political changes. The "No" supporters, however, will also expect responsiveness to their social concerns—especially regarding human rights and the unfair distribution of economic benefits. While these issues may be put off temporarily for the sake of unity in the upcoming elections, they still require future attention.

VIRGINIA M. BOUVIER

Virginia M. Bouvier, a senior associate of the Washington Office on Latin America, is co-author of "Conditions for Chile's Plebiscite on Pinochet," a report from a joint WOLA-CIIR (Catholic Institute for International Relations) delegation to Chile this September. The report is available from WOLA (110 Maryland Ave., N.E. Washington, D.C. 20002) for $4 plus postage.

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

WHERE THE KIDS ARE

TEACHING VALUES IN THE CLASSROOM

"Neither Candidate Satisfies CEOs on Issue of Education." I might have been mildly surprised by that headline had I not been preparing the last several months for a speech to a teachers' institute. In the course of that research I learned that everybody from the million-dollar-a-year financier to the despairing single parent in the inner city is looking to the schools for help with their problems. The concern of the corporate executives gathered for the fall meeting of the Business Council was the quality of the work force available to them. They lament the growing shortage of well-trained, well-educated workers.

Others are concerned that a whole generation of young people are being shortchanged in their preparation for life. At the Business Council meeting, Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, cited a recent survey showing that even in middle-class suburban schools only 15 to 20 percent of students were "getting much of an education." Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, pointed out that inner-city children remain in "disastrous educational circumstances."

For some time now the nation's schools have been under pressure to improve the academic performance of their students—the "back to basics" movement. They have had some success. If we use college entrance examinations as a measure of their efforts they have been most effective in helping those students whose scores were the lowest. The scores of blacks and Mexican-Americans have risen steadily for the past five years. This fact alone seems to prove that concerted effort and concentration on specific student problems can make a difference and make it rather quickly.

"Youth Indicators 1988," a publication of the Department of Education, points to other improvements in the high school world. The dropout rate has declined by one-sixth in the last fifteen years. For blacks it has been almost cut in half. Teen-age pregnancies have dropped by one-sixth among blacks. There has been a slight decline in the use of alcohol and drugs duting the last decade.

The connection of these last three statistics to school programs may seem tenuous but it is there. Students have

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been persuaded that staying in school and performing well will bring rewards. *Ergo*, schools *can* change things for young people. But can schools do what a troubled nation is now asking them to do—to teach all the values necessary for a good life?

Whether classrooms are the proper setting for teaching values has been debated endlessly during the past few decades. It has become a subject in the present presidential campaign and prompts controversy about what kind of values should be taught. A report of its values commission issued recently by the District of Columbia School Board brushes this controversy aside. It states:

> We believe that schools have a responsibility to help students differentiate between right and wrong, sharing and taking, true leadership and manipulation, principled action and complacency. And we believe that if the District of Columbia's schools aggressively champion the community's shared values, all students will be encouraged to adopt, nurture, and protect those values as their own.

The report insists that there is "a common core of values" that includes respect for human dignity, concern for the welfare of others, personal integrity, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Members of the school board defend the report with a sense of urgency. They represent a system which draws from a large, poor population. It is a population, like that in most big cities, plagued with violence, unemployment, and drugs. (This year, 220 teen-agers or children have been killed in drug-related battles in Washington, D.C.; in Detroit, the number is 202.) Members agree that

> Many are growing up with virtually no sense of identity or self-esteem...ignorant of the social movements and political struggles which have shaped their lives... Among some young people the value of human life has declined so precipitously that they believe they are justified in killing other children for their jackets or radios—or even as a response to an insulting look or remark.

But it is not only in these poor populations that the value of human life has declined. We have all read of the graduates from a Catholic prep school in New York who attempted a robbery, were caught in a gun battle, and dumped their dead companion in the weeds.

"Youth Indicators 1988" reminds us that the first cause of deaths among all teen-agers is motor vehicle accidents. The second is suicide. Thirty-three young persons in the United States take their own lives every day. These two facts apply in affluent schools as much as, or more than, in inner-city schools.

Middle-class students may not lust for things enough to kill or steal (although many are shoplifters), but they do enter the part-time work force in unprecedented numbers in order to buy the trendy designer clothing that the recreation society has taught them to value. They are juggling home, work, and school, and have no time for community. Peter Zollo, executive vice-president of Teenage Research Unlimited, says that, on the one hand, teens today are family-oriented, on the other, "money is a prime motivator. They are very materialistic."

All the evidence shows that if there is no consistent effort to inculcate positive values, our young soon learn negative ones from society and experience. But why, many teachers ask, must we put the burden of teaching values on the schools? Columnist Courtland Milloy puts it bluntly: "I believe we ought to teach children where we find them and for now it's in the schools more than the home or church."

In an era of two-career families, broken families, and single-parent families, the schools are the most structured environment that children encounter. They are also the places in which they spend most of their waking hours. And their high school years are perhaps the last in which they can be reached. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

THE MIND HAS A LIFE, TOO

CAN THE SCHOOLS SHARPEN IT?

Not only is 1988 an election year in the United States, an election in which both candidates for president stress the importance of education for the nation's future ("I want to be the education president"; "If America is to compete in the twenty-first century"; etc.); it is also the 100th anniversary of the death of Matthew Arnold, whose lasting fame rests on his achievements as poet and critic, but whose more perishable writings on education and society (especially *Culture and Anarchy*) remain readable today in a way that few other nineteenth-century writings of that genre do.

It is an entertaining exercise to juxtapose Arnold's thoughts on education with the current American educational situation.

Though doing a certain amount of violence to the subtlety and complexity of Arnold's argument, we might summarize his position on the content of education in two propositions: (1) the curriculum of the schools should be basically literary rather than scientific; and (2) the pressing need of the day is not so much education in character as education of intellect.

The literature-versus-science issue was the subject of a debate Arnold engaged in with Thomas Henry Huxley, the famous defender of the Darwinian faith. Huxley was afraid of letting school graduates enter the modern world without solid grounding in the natural sciences, Arnold of letting them enter the modern or any other world without solid grounding in good literature—"the best that has been thought and said in the world."

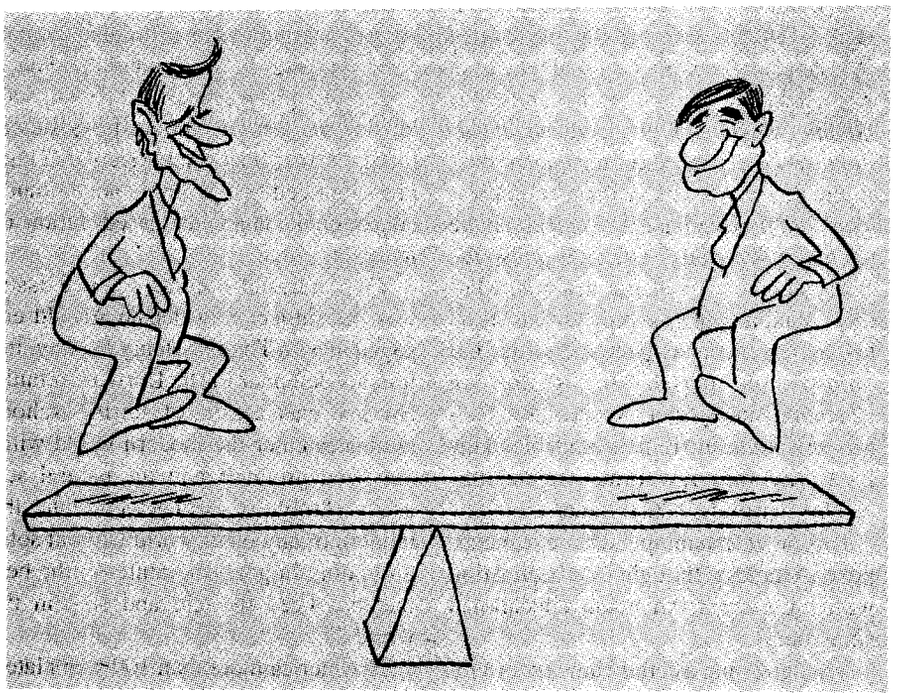
In America more than 100 years later,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our practical genius for compromise has led us to resolve this ancient dispute in two ways. First, we have split the difference between Arnold and Huxley, offering a typical high school curriculum that is a mixture of literature and science (with some social science and a few other items thrown in to flavor the broth). Second, in a brilliant stroke of impartiality, our high school graduates—concerned, no doubt, not to offend the partisans of either literature or science by leaning too much in one direction or the other—leave school knowing next to nothing about either literature or science. Resisting years of attempted seduction on the part of teachers, they have kept their literary-scientific virginity intact.

Antedating Max Weber by a generation or so, Arnold did not have the term "Protestant ethic" at his disposal. But he was pointing to pretty much the same reality when (borrowing Heinrich Heine's distinction between "Hebraism" and "Hellenism") he spoke of the Hebraism of the English middle classes, people whose religious background was either the evangelical wing of the Church of England or the dissenting Protestant denominations (e.g., Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalist). He commended the middle classes for their long devotion to Old Testament standards of conduct, and acknowledged that England's great wealth, its dominant position in the industrial and commercial world of the nineteenth century, was the result of its Puritan heritage. But he reminded the middle classes (whom he delighted to describe as "Philistines"—another borrowing from Heine), that conduct, though the single most important thing in life, is not the only thing; it is not the *unum necessarium*. In their preoccupation with right conduct, the Jews of old discovered the most important value in human life. But the old Greeks discovered something important too, a value the Jews had missed or at all events underrated: the life of the mind. The complete and well-rounded human being, then, will value Hellenism as well as Hebraism. And the most urgent need of the mid-Victorian English middle classes, Arnold believed, was to develop a lively intellectual life to balance their admirable but one-sided moral development. Otherwise (and here Arnold sounds like a contemporary American politician) England would not be able to compete in the future with more intellectual nations like Germany and France.

Present-day Americans, especially those of the younger generation, have followed half of Arnold's program—the part that calls on them to understand that morality is not the whole of life. As proof of their new understanding they have become prodigious drinkers, fornicators, and sabbath-breakers; and while that may not be exactly what Arnold had in mind, nonetheless I imagine we could persuade him it's a step in the right direction. After all, once we get them loosened up, once we get the young people of the world liberated from the last remnants of Victorian morality, it should be easy to turn them on to the best that has been thought and said in the world. Unfortunately, they are not turned on yet; and increasingly the best that has been thought and said is becoming the esoteric possession of a handful of scholars, not a general possession of any halfway-educated man or woman. We are producing generations of young people that have the virtues of neither Jew nor Greek.



We could do worse, I suppose, than to have presidential candidates who profess to be concerned about the future of American education. But the chief purpose of education is to produce an educated human being; and to cry from the rooftops that one is in favor of education, education, and yet more education, without stopping to define the nature of an educated person, is to say little or nothing at all. One of the abiding merits of Arnold is that he provides us with a good idea of what a properly educated person ought to look like. But if we embrace his idea (which I myself do, more or less), we are bound to get discouraged; for contemporary American culture has something in it that makes it profoundly hostile to a chiefly literary education; and to try to sell young people on Arnold's ideal of a personality finely balanced between Hellenism and Hebraism is to try to sell something no one wants to buy. Worse still, the reason no one wants to buy it is not that it is so difficult to attain (which of course it is), but that it is not even regarded as attractive. Sell them on sweetness and light? One might just as well sell them on the idea that they should retire to the desert and live like St. Anthony of Egypt.

You can't blame a candidate for failing to promote monastic migrations. Neither can you blame him for declining to speak seriously about education. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WILLIAM BUCKLEY'S SEVERAL SELVES

SOME OF WHICH ARE RATHER SWEET

WILFRID SHEED

Writing a biography of William F. Buckley is somewhat like trying to play a serious part in a Marx Brothers movie: you're not going to get a lot of attention either way. So let it be said right off that John B. Judis seems to have done a better job than I would have thought possible at this stage (*William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives,* Simon and Schuster, $22.95, 528 pp.). It takes tact to perform an autopsy on a live body, but Judis has done his work cleanly, without either breaking any bones or leaving out anything important. The controversies on which Buckley feeds are all here, laid out with admirable lucidity and what is more unusual, so is the atmosphere surrounding them. And now, back to Groucho.

On the face of it, William F. Buckley has lived a very proper conservative life: which is to say, he sowed his intellectual wild oats while young and has since mellowed into a tactician, or statesman, as you prefer. The fact that the oats happened to be conservative ones is neither here nor there. Buckley is to conservatives roughly what his father, a wildcat oil man, was to the Forbes 500. And besides, being a radical youth would, in those days as in most, probably have seemed rather too conventional for such a gifted showman. Everyone knows what to say to a radical youth ("just wait till you're older," of course), but what precisely did you say in those days to a conservative youth, after you'd said "welcome to the bank"? Before Buckley came along, there was no model for the conservative *enfant terrible;* now of course there are scores of them, but even today his imitators never seem to get it quite right (smugness is not enough).

Not that Buckley's conservatism was ever anything but totally sincere. But if one views him as being at least as much an aesthete as an intellectual, his choice of cause was, to borrow his own words a moment, "insanely felicitous" and, as ever, beautifully timed.

No one who wasn't there can imagine the wave of sheer niceness that swept the country in the wake of World War II, of a kind you might effect for a returned veteran (make sure his room is just as he left it). Although offstage a record number of divorces were recorded, you'd never have guessed it from Hollywood, and a ditto of labor strikes, the mass media simply did not register friction. There were no satirists in those days (unless you count Bob Hope), no McLaughlin groups, not even a lonely Mike Wallace to puncture the stillness: it was as if we had been put on a bland diet of everything.

Upon this self-conscious idyll, this jittery Eden, young Buckley burst like a combination firework and stink bomb, in the grand Irish manner of Wilde or Shaw (and if he seems like an untypical Irishman, so did they). His thesis, as it came to me secondhand (we didn't exactly *read* Buckley in my set, we were content to sneer, as he might say, pre-emptively), amounted to perhaps the first full-scale assault launched on what would later be called the secular religion from the angle of those who actually pay for it: namely, in his first brief (*God and Man at Yale*), the woolly old alumni of Yale, who, as he saw it, were spending good money to have their sons taught that one way or another daddy was all wet (a doctrine that, to this day, never made a professor unpopular).

Nothing could have sundered the postwar concordat more dramatically. In whatever kind of peace treaty a nation makes with itself, academic freedom had somehow sneaked its way into being a cornerstone and an absolute. And then—there was the way he said it. Perhaps nowadays, young Buckley's rather special brand of polite impertinence would get lost among all the coarser varieties—irreverence is a debased coin—but in the early fifties, Buckley carried, *mutatis mutandis,* some of the same postwar surprise value as a Marlon Brando or Jack Kerouac: his defense of such hopeless cases as Joe McCarthy and those incredible alumni seemed almost wickedly perverse, not to say deliciously embarrassing, in one so obviously intelligent.

But more daring even than this outrageous flirtation with "American boobism" (to use Mencken's old phrase) was his manifest willingness, verging on eagerness, to be hated. On television we watched professional wrestling back then in which contestants willfully set out to be villains so that Amer-

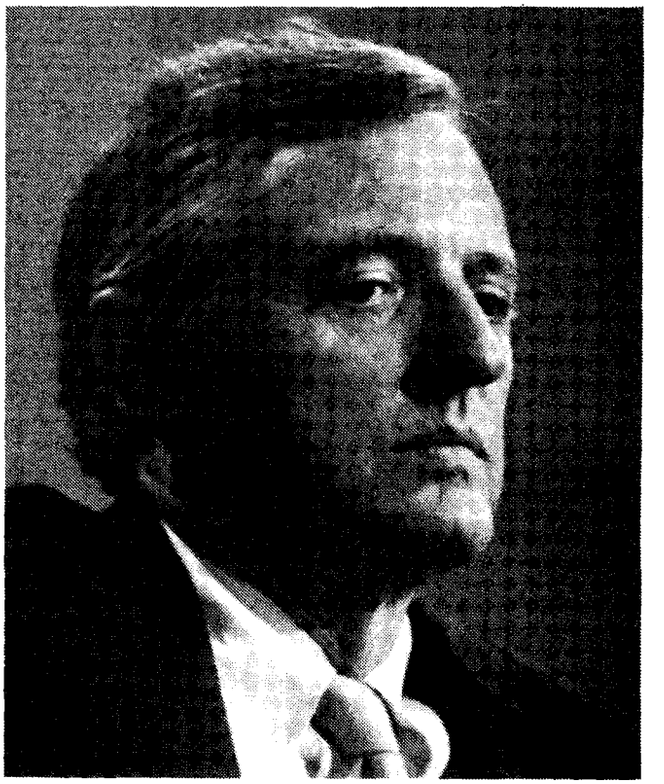
WILFRID SHEED *was* Commonweal*'s drama critic and book editor, 1964-66. Two of his eight novels have been National Book Award nominees.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

icans, in their prison of politeness, would have someone (besides phantom Communists) to hiss, while in college auditoriums, people filed in to watch Buckley: and although, unlike the wrestlers, he usually confounded their wishes by winning his debates, it was all right with us, because he was wrong—wasn't he? I mean those positions were so preposterous.

It is now history how, in this semi-comic guise, he stole the liberals' pants and Pied Pipered just enough of their youth away to form his own movement. And now, of course, he is stuck with them. His wild oats eventually became commitments, as wild oats will, and his disciples expect him to go on leading and inspiring them indefinitely even if he feels like doing something else. Even the liberal Mr. Judis rather wants Bill Buckley to return kicking and gouging to the ring, as certain atheists wish the church to go back to the old ways.

So although Buckley's politics were always a sort of anti-politics, aimed at someday releasing mankind from its perennial obsession with legislation, he is as much bound by them as anyone. Never mind how many books he writes celebrating all the things you can do with life besides politics—his friends and his enemies dismiss these books with stern impatience, and demand the Act again, as they might classic Coke.



Where, then, did the Act come from and where, if it has gone, did it go to? From Mr. Judis's account I would guess that the youthful Bill began, like many of us, myself certainly, as in some sense his mother trying to be his father. Aloise Buckley was, it seems, an extremely *gemütlich* character, endlessly friendly and welcoming, which Bill still is (in fact, he has the personality of a Dickens ending) while father Will was more reserved, ironic, and if it came to it, combative. Will Buckley, Sr., was not, however—and this is important—authoritarian around the house (only his opinions were), but quite a seductive father, the kind you *want* to please all life long. Nobody, one likes to think, could have browbeaten Buckley into sharing that particular world view, or any other, but he could be enticed. And Buckley, Sr., rewarded him handsomely with the kind of unreserved approval that might almost make a young man cocky.

Of this world view, perhaps the first thing to be said is that no Buckley could ever have founded a magazine called *Commonweal,* because the word itself was too alien. As Irish Protestants by ancestry, the family had a long history of outsideness, but also of *above*ness, which is not such a bad location if you have the vitality to enjoy it, but only a so-so place to pick up a burning sense of the Public Interest. Mr. Judis stresses the part that circumstance played in the Buckleys' ubiquitous apartness, but in every case, whether as northerners in the South, or as the wrong kind of Catholics in the North (too rich to be Irish, or too Irish to be "accepted," or something), it seems that they actually preferred to stress their differences rather than settle them, as if the differences themselves were some precious source of energy, and nothing to snivel about. Even in Sharon, Connecticut (and surely if one can't make one's peace there, one simply isn't trying) they seemed, to the neighbors at least, to be too proud to feel at home. Will had spent his glory years in Mexico, and he may have passed on to his children a sense of being foreigners everywhere, even—and this is what kept them from being just awful—among the rich, their natural allies.

It was this last quirk that made them truly eccentric, and original. Like the Kennedys, whom they resemble in no other important respect except largeness, the Buckleys were not even going to take a chance on being snubbed by older money. Instead they formed their own little renaissance garrison and rejoiced in each other—and Bill still shows the unmistakable signs of a happy childhood.

As the family genius, he had probably enjoyed himself the most, but also absorbed the most, so that by the time he hit the outside world, he was the very quintessence of Buckley, and no compromise was possible. A certain comic pathos ensues in Judis's pages as young Bill brings the family ideal banging against the heads of his new chums: so far so good in the primary grades, where you can barrel right through on *hauteur* and courage, but strangely painful by midadolescence, when so many things are painful anyway.

Buckley seems to have entered prep school and the army as a rather lonely young prig, still trying his formidable best to feel superior, but not, in his own *gemütlich* soul, content to be quite so unhappy about it or so at odds with his *new* families. So he began perhaps for the first time to listen to someone besides his father; and such are his gifts that he went on to become one of the world's finest listeners, thus launching a mighty second career, as the editor who discovered Garry Wills, John

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

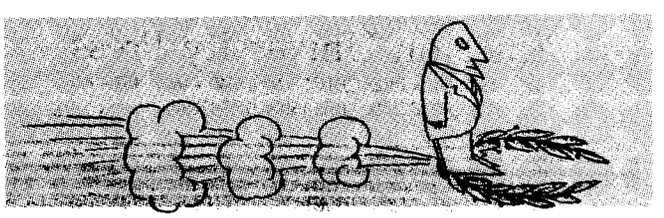
Leonard, and Joan Didion among others, and as an interviewer-debater who allows himself dangerously close to his opponent-subjects' flame. If ever he does lose the Faith (a cold day in hell anyway you look at it), it will be because he has simply listened himself out of it, over hundreds of hours with the brightest liberal spokesmen he can round up for his "Firing Line" shows.

It seems possible that this second side of him might never have developed so satisfactorily if he had gone straight from home to Yale, because at a university an entertainer of his quality can always find admirers, regardless of his likability. And it was at Yale that Buckley the *enfant terrible* really came into his own, but with the invaluable difference that he now knew pretty much what he was doing. If the old preschool and army brattiness "played" here, he would use it to advance his otherwise very serious beliefs, with an adult's hard-won sense of when to turn it off and charm his way back into favor, and if the crowd wanted Amadeus along with his music (and surely that is what the whole postwar brashness movement, from Brando to Punk Rock, is all about)—well he couldn't quite give them that, but he could give the obnoxiously bright child who asks the obvious questions that everyone has forgotten the answers to. And if you found his weird invocations of, say, catechism morality a bit perverse or childish, you were always free to discuss it with him afterward, if you thought you could go three minutes with the Champ.

Buckley's sheer openness then and now dazzles like a smile, and I was reminded of how little it had changed when I noted in Mr. Judis's acknowledgments that the subject had offered his complete cooperation to the author, to a stranger, that is, with opposed political views. When, in our crabbed times, did you last hear of anyone offering his full cooperation to anyone? All of which puts Buckley in the painful position of being an open book to whom people look constantly for guidance. Suppose he does change his mind about, say, Reagan? Well, he can always change the subject, but even that tells a tale in a man who has lost all the privileges of inscrutability.

It's important, in assessing Buckley, to note that he has been operating under this kind of anxious observation for a long time; which means that he can never quite be himself, because in all his public emanations, he tends to have something more pressing on his mind.

For instance, Mr. Judis reports that on the air Buckley continued for an unseasonably long time to take the most outrageous positions he could think of in order to fill the house, even at the risk of caricaturing his own cause. But in his magazine and with his own right and left to consider, he became quite early on something of a voice for moderation. For instance, as far back as 1956, we find the *National Review* advising its zealots not to get their Irish up over a U.S. invasion of Hungary: we weren't going to do it, and it was silly to pretend we were—a position I can't remember his airwaves persona urging on anyone.



Perhaps as a result of these and similar calculations, Barry Goldwater found himself in 1964 fronting for a conservative movement which had evolved a defiantly bizarre façade all but obscuring a somewhat more solid interior, and he was, of course, hung from the façade. And then at some point after that (1968 might make a good date for it) Buckley may himself have begun to feel that conservatism had become a little too serious to need a Jersey wrestler shilling for it any more, and Battling Bill, the Eli Phenom, went into a slow fade from which he has never fully recovered, and to hell with the ratings.

I pick 1968 because that was also the year of his mini-blood bath with Gore Vidal: a curious little replica, staged in an ABC booth, of the hatreds raging outside in the streets during the Democratic Convention that year. "Queer" said Buckley, "crypto-fascist" said Vidal, and then and there Bill may have decided that this stuff wasn't fun any more. To put the matter Christianly: if he no longer felt playful about it, and if the faces he was making had turned into real faces, it was time to get out. (In such circumstances, catechism morality would demand no less of any of us, even critics the day they find real blood on their typewriters.)

And who knows? Perhaps on that same night or some other like it, this very decent man may, just like that, have wearied of being hated: Lord knows, he had held out long enough. And this late-blooming mellowness may have added yet another imponderable nudging him to hide his cards, namely a more intense regard for personal loyalty. Although he has always been a byword in this particular virtue, one always felt up to now that it could be overridden fairly lightly by concerns of state. Now those concerns might have to be a little more pressing.

I am thinking in particular of President Reagan's recent visit to Moscow which Buckley, unless I missed a column, chose to ignore completely, at least in his Epistles to the Pagans, thus creating a somewhat eerie journalistic vacuum. It's possible, of course, that since all his silences are pointed, Buckley may feel by now that the point on them is all the weapon he needs. And it's also possible, as one gropes for tortuous *raisons d'état*, to imagine him giving his old friend Ron the edge of his tongue in private and leaving it at that, on the principle (quite new to him) that there's no point arguing with a *fait accompli*, and that his influence may best be exercised in private anyway. The Jesuits had young Bill for a year (1938-9), and as usual probably have a lot to answer for. But in this case, something also tells me that he wouldn't have done the same for Richard Nixon.

All of which still leaves him some distance from E.M. Forster and his famous saying vis-à-vis the relative merits of betraying friends and countries (although I've always felt it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

should be noted some place sometime on old E.M.'s behalf that a Cambridge Communist wouldn't even have seen the point of the distinction: you betrayed whom you were told to). The change, if any, in Buckley would be in the direction of his mentor, Whittaker Chambers, who had once turned his friend Alger Hiss over to the state, but with a heavy, complicated heart. Since young Bill was not born with a great gift for complexity, Chambers must have come as a godsend, with his melancholy subtleties kept barely above water by rather freakish high spirits. Chambers added much specific gravity to the highflying Buckley, and helped to shade in his private self, if not always his public one.

For all his brashness, Buckley has never resisted education from others, and Mr. Judis records how aptly he put himself to school to the two wise men of the *National Review*, Chambers (who never quite seemed to land on the magazine, but always hovered), and the foxy James Burnham, exchanging friendship for wisdom back and forth with each in the ancient Greek manner. Burnham's sly prudences in particular arrived ready to go and were packed straight into editorial policy; Chambers's influence is more elusive, and probably belongs more properly in a spiritual biography. But both would undoubtedly have suffused the major book that Bill never wrote.

As for that alleged book, waiting for it, as I gather some disciples still do (every American is supposed to write one), seems by now rather like waiting for Norman Mailer's Big Novel, or even a Teddy Kennedy presidency. The world is full of major books, but this one, even supposing that Buckley could have written it, would have come at the cost of just too many good sideshows, of a sort that no one else could possibly have staged. With such careers as Buckley's or Mailer's, the action may not even be in the main tent anyway: simply sit back and enjoy the circus.

In the bubbly personal journals that crown Bill's smoking jacket period, he has been accused of enjoying his money just a little too much, but it's my impression that he is barely aware of the stuff. Some of his pleasures are expensive, and some are not, but I couldn't swear that he knows the actual list price of *anything*: if he is celebrating something these days, it is the freedom not to care, and to enjoy one's blessings with a glad, unquestioning heart, as God presumably intended.

This insouciance can produce comic effects. As I recall, he once set out to do some columns on the minor inconveniences of life, and his first one concerned the infernal difficulty of mooring his boat in some country or other. Although he had invited his readers to chime in after that with their own matching peeves, it seems that none of them really felt up to it, and the series died right there, with Buckley still baying at the harbormaster.

In real life, his unearthly detachment may make him at times an unreliable guide to things like socialism (honestly—who needs it?), (then again, who needs another guide to it either?), but it also makes him—the virtue that dare not speak its name—a model of personal private generosity for his fellow millionaires to emulate if they ever get round to it. If there's one thing about money that he *really* enjoys it is giving it away;

The Best Of
The Season From
Princeton

Victorian Suicide
Mad Crimes and Sad Histories
Barbara T. Gates
Through fascinating and dramatic examples, Barbara Gates demonstrates how attitudes toward suicide in Victorian England changed from moral censure to compassionate concern. Along the way, she touches on everthing from *Wuthering Heights* to "shilling shockers."
Cloth: $19.95 ISBN 0-691-09437-3

Anarchist Portraits
Paul Avrich
From the celebrated Russian intellectuals Michael Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin to the little-known Australian bootmaker and radical speaker J. W. Fleming, this book probes the lives and personalities of representative participants of the anarchist movement.
Paul Avrich captures the flavor of a time when anarchism was a vital part of a worldwide struggle against political and social injustice.
Cloth: $27.50 ISBN 0-691-04753-7

Condemned to Repetition
The United States and Nicaragua
Robert A. Pastor
Here is an insider's account of U.S. policy making toward Nicaragua, written by a major participant. Robert Pastor was Director of Latin American Affairs on the National Security Council from 1977 to 1981, a crucial period in U.S.-Nicaragua relations. With scholarly evenhandedness he offers a new interpretation of the kinds of choices that U.S. policy makers faced as they responded to the Nicaraguan crisis during the Carter administration, in which he served, and through the Reagan years.
Paper: $12.95 ISBN 0-691-02291-7

AT YOUR BOOKSTORE OR
Princeton University Press
41 WILLIAM ST. • PRINCETON, NJ 08540 • (609) 452-4900
ORDERS 800-PRS-ISBN (777-4726)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and insofar as he occasionally likes to think of the world as the Buckley family writ large, he has a vested interest in believing that this impulse is universal. In a particularly poignant passage, he once noted that the trouble with the rich was that they weren't as good as they ought to be (or words to that effect), and I remembered thinking, whoever expected them to be?

Well, to every man his own Utopia, I suppose. To my mind, the vision implied here of a Daddy Warbucks (or even a Ronald Reagan) world, serene in its benevolence, seems as farfetched as any liberal meliorism: but then Buckley's political philosophy might seem a cold little thing without it.

But, of course, I can already imagine the old gunfighter rising wearily from his barstool to answer this, and that's the last thing I want at this point. For one thing, the man has surely earned his rest from Commonweal Catholics by now, and for another, there comes a time (quite early these days) in everyone's life when an ancient enemy becomes a more welcome sight than a new ally. "Is Bernard Shaw a coming peril?" Chesterton was once asked (and I quote from wobbly memory). "No," said the great man, "he is a vanishing pleasure."

Mutatis mutandis one more time (no Buckley piece would be complete without it), I couldn't put it better myself. □

SCREEN

SIX WOMEN

'GORILLAS,' 'PIZZA' & 'THE ACCUSED'

Gorillas in the Mist tells the story of Dian Fossey, student and champion of the mountain gorilla. The film presents gruesome scenes of poachers slaughtering gorillas, scenes that revolt the conscience and reduce to insignificance some complaints that the film sentimentalizes Fossey and ignores evidence of her erratic behavior near the end of her life. If this slaughter of innocents is what she was fighting, it would be enough to drive anyone mad. The significance of Fossey's life wasn't her death (probably at the hands of poachers) but her work. This film is a memorial to its worth.

Large segments of the film—directed by Michael Apted, starring Sigourney Weaver, and shot on location in Rwanda—are the conventional stuff of African heroic adventure. Apted shows scenes of Weaver's greenhorn expectations, her learning process out in the bush, her bonding with a friendly native tracker, and a soupçon of romance (with an Australian photographer, played by Bryan Brown). But there are two key differences.

First, the hero in question is a woman. Fossey goes further than Isak Dinesen imagined—so high into treacherous mountains that the title could have been *Up in Africa*. Even the love scenes are shot in a subtle, punning way to convey a feminist slant. Weaver, whose chin God made to embody forthright resolution, convincingly embodies Fossey's determination to save "her gorillas." As in *Aliens*, Weaver here combines toughness and protectiveness in what might be termed a kind of maternal *macha*.

Second, Weaver shares the camera with a band of wild gorillas that she too, like Fossey, had to work to know and engage in a trusting exchange. It is standard acting lore never to share a shot with animals, worse scene-stealers than babies. But Weaver shares scenes without losing face, probably because (again like Fossey) when among the animals she seems to become one, grunting, scratching, adopting submissive postures as needed, and deferring to the largest male, whom she slowly lures into friendship.

Weaver's "exchanges" with the gorillas are magical. Fossey was inspired to her mission by Dr. Louis Leakey, the anthropologist who urged her to study the few remaining mountain gorillas as a likely relative of early human beings. Despite its limits, the power of the film is to show how Leakey's science became Fossey's religion. The gorillas live in an Edenic world. While they may be related to humans, "pre-hominids," in Leakey's terms, they engage in neither the homicide nor ecocide of the so-called higher species. The very innocence of the gorillas pitted against the aggression of men was so strong in the film that I was overcome and had to leave before the last scene's conclusion.

Mystic Pizza has a strange title; too bad the plot isn't as odd. It's an entertaining coming-of-age comedy that doesn't have the courage of its eccentricities. The title puns about a pizza restaurant where the film's three young heroines work: their boss (Conchata Farrell) won't tell them the secrets of the special, Portuguese-style pizza she cooks to delight her patrons.

The pun is also literal: the restaurant is in Mystic, Connecticut, an area where Portuguese immigrants have long taken up waterfront or seafaring jobs. Aside from exploring the ethnic problems of Portuguese-Americans, the film makes use of the local color of the coast, its wetlands, port life, and half-elegant, half-ramshackle quaintness. But the background is drawn unevenly at first, and never quite builds up the strength it should have.

Mystic Pizza is ambitious in its fourfold plot: the fate of the restaurant and its three waitresses (Annabeth Gish and Julia Roberts as two Portuguese-American sisters; Lili Taylor as their friend). The trio acts well, especially Taylor, who gets to deliver broad comic lines. But the characters are stereotyped. Gish, lighter in color than the others, is the girl with brains; she's industriously perky, sexually innocent, and headed for Yale. Roberts plays a tall, feisty, strutting moll, luxuriating in her sexuality and its effect on men. Taylor has little education but loads of energy, most of which she spends trying to evade early marriage to someone she's crazy about.

The film has some funny moments with a role reversal: Taylor's boyfriend (Vincent D'Onofrio, from *Full Metal Jacket*) refuses to make love to her before she marries him. He wants "a wedding, in a church, with the blessings of God upon us, for Chrissakes!" Such wit, however offensively put, would have been useful elsewhere in a screenplay which

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

promises to let the characters escape their defining qualities, but never quite delivers. The filmmakers (especially director Donald Petrie and writer Amy Jones) seem to hover between making a standard teen film and appealing to more sophisticated tastes.

As a film about and partly for young adults, *Mystic Pizza* is interestingly idiosyncratic. While limited by formulas, it isn't reduced to them. I guess half a pie is better than none. Still, one hungers for the lines to be more spicy, so to speak—to have some of the secret ingredient that makes the pizza special.

The Accused, with Paramount backing, promises to become the most widely seen movie yet about the tough subject of rape. The low budget *Extremities* (1986) dealt with the subject in, perhaps, both too brutal and too intellectual a manner. This year's Australian *Shame*, despite a strong screenplay, was also limited by meager publicity to art-house audiences.

Unfortunately, *The Accused* lacks the strengths of its predecessors. Its plot is potentially strong, adapted from the news stories several years ago of a gang rape in a Massachusetts bar, whose patrons cheered on the assault. The title is clearly meant to reveal a dark irony: in rape cases—especially one in which the victim drinks heavily, smokes pot, and acts "sexy"—the woman often stands accused of a social crime while her assailants are accused of a legal one. Unfortunately, the power of this double injustice is never fully conveyed in the film.

The acting is partly to blame. Jodie Foster does a good job at portraying the victim's low-class habits and language, but never manages to compel full, outraged sympathy with her plight. Most of the fault lies with co-star Kelly McGillis as the district attorney who must both prosecute on Foster's behalf and "defend" her from social stigma. Scenes between McGillis and Foster fall completely flat, especially a key explosion when Foster accuses McGillis of abandoning her by settling for a conviction on lesser charges of "reckless endangerment."

The movie's subplot traces the evolving relationship of the two women. McGillis is supposed to be distant at first—better schooled, legalistic, and concerned more with the certainty than grade of conviction. But her distance is too distant, and her final warmth unconvincing. Even in expressing anger or class misunderstandings, there has to be some chemistry, but McGillis's temperature is sub-zero. In a second case that she begins in response to Foster's angry charge of abandonment, McGillis prosecutes the bar bystanders who hooted the rape on; but during the trial her acting consists of wooden, lawyerly mannerisms.

To an extent, both McGillis and Foster suffer from the shape of the screenplay: it starts after the rape, which is seen in flashbacks from courtroom testimony. Sadly, director Jonathan Kaplan has made the rape scenes—as awful as they are—the film's most vivid ones. Likewise, the best acting in the film belongs to one of the bar villains (Leo Rossi). The final effect is that the ends and means of this film just don't jibe.

TOM O'BRIEN

THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS

Radical Evil and the Power of Good in History

By Jeffrey Burton Russell

The Devil, Satan, Lucifer, Mephistopheles—throughout history the Prince of Darkness has taken many names and shapes. The noted historian Jeffrey Burton Russell here chronicles the story of the Devil from antiquity to the present.

After a compelling essay on the nature of evil, Russell uncovers the origins of the concept of the Devil in various early cultures and traces its evolution from the time of the ancient Hebrews through the first centuries of the Christian era, the Middle Ages, and into our own era. Along the way, Russell focuses on images of evil found in folklore, scholastic thought, art, literature, theology, and mysticism.

Is the Devil an outmoded superstition, as most educated people today believe? Or do the horrors of the twentieth century and the specter of nuclear war make all too clear the continuing need for some vital symbol of radical evil? *The Prince of Darkness* will invite its readers to confront these and other critical questions as they explore the past faces of this enduring figure. $21.95

Available in bookstores or from

Cornell University Press
124 Roberts Place, Ithaca, NY 14850

CORNELL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Does anyone remember J. Blue?

KATHY PETERSEN CECALA

Mr. Blue popped into my brain rather unexpectedly one day, when I was having a very ordinary conversation with my husband. Actually, it was more argument than conversation: I wanted to replace our old living-room sofa with something new and stylish, while my spouse expressed concern that I might not be sated with this one mere purchase.

"And what else do you want? Chairs, carpeting...."

"How about two sofas?" I blurted out. "Two sofas, two coffee tables, four end tables. Let's double the amount of furniture we have in each room: two double beds and four dressers in the bedroom, two tables and eight chairs in the dining area, and so on...."

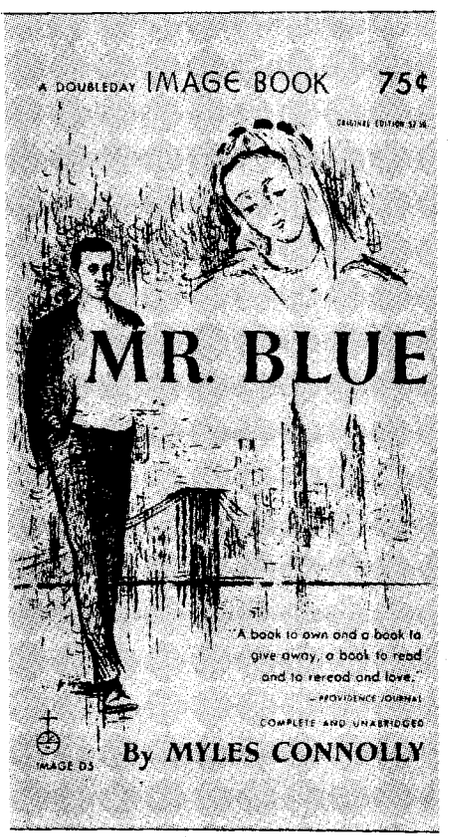
"What are you talking about?" he demanded.

And it took me a long minute to figure out where this came from; it was a surprisingly long mental journey, which took me back to my parochial school days. I was a different sort of creature then, a bookworm who thought not of sofas or redecorating, but simply *thought*, a great deal more than I do now about questions of faith and morality, about visions and dogma and heroic sanctity. I wanted to be saintly, forever pure. But in the middle of seventh grade, I read a book which knocked me for a loop, and completely turned upside-down my thoughts and ideas about conventional Catholicism.

It was *Mr. Blue* by Myles Connolly. In the book, episodic in nature, there is mention of a mansion Blue briefly owned, in which he capriciously doubled the amount of furniture he found in each room. He also hired a bunch of out-of-work butlers and servants to occupy the house. I laughed, delighted to recall this funny obscure book from my girlhood.

"Forget the sofa," I told my husband. "Let's go live in a packing crate, atop a skyscraper in New York."

Does anyone else remember J. Blue? Or was he just a brief bright star in popular Catholic literature, burning brightly in the thirties and forties before disappearing into obscurity? I remember him, and I wasn't even born until after the book's sixteenth printing. I cannot remember any other tale I read in my youth that has continued to haunt me as that of Mr. Blue. I'm not sure why. It's just a slip of a story, more an outline than a real book, a scanty work of a hundred pages or so about a young man—colorful, eccentric, and thoroughly Catholic—who dies young and tragically in the embrace of Lady Poverty. Written and published in the 1920s (first by Macmillan, then reprinted by Image Books), the book focuses on a character who, in retrospect, seems more a hero for the Age of Aquarius, the nonconformism of the sixties and early seventies. ("A modern Saint Francis" a quote on the back cover proclaimed.) In today's era of yuppies and power investments, he merely seems lunatic. Still, his charm—for me, anyway—persists.


A DOUBLEDAY IMAGE BOOK 75¢
MR. BLUE
"A book to own and a book to give away, a book to read and to reread and love."
— PROVIDENCE JOURNAL
COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED
By MYLES CONNOLLY
IMAGE D5

When I first read *Mr. Blue*—it was actually one of the first "adult" books I ever read—I was completely enthralled. Here was a departure from the usual models of Catholicism we were presented: staid, severe saints and martyrs I was trying anxiously to emulate. Blue was quite a shock. A crazy man, a fool for God, Blue flew kites; he loved balloons; he made up bizarre stories. Blue squandered an entire fortune! He made the pursuit of wealth and status seem ridiculous and meaningless. And I read the book and reread it, burned with all the boundless idealism of a twelve-year-old, feeling certain that *my life had been changed*. That was in 1969, a time of social ferment and change. I couldn't wait to be an adult, to take my turn at changing the world in a wild and glorious way.

I wish I could report that J. Blue changed my life, skewed it in a crazy, colorful, and profoundly altruistic direction. But I went on to new books, new heroes and heroines, new goals. Blue never completely disappeared from my mind or heart, though; every few years I'd have a random thought about him whenever I would see a kite or balloon fluttering in the breeze, or a shabby

KATHY PETERSEN CECALA *is an indexer for the* Wall Street Journal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

young man in a wrinkled, hempen suit. I would think of Blue's homemade garments (many decades before the Don Johnson look; I bet Blue went sockless, too).

After that sofa conversation with my husband, I returned to *Mr. Blue*. I still possessed the book, but hadn't cracked it open since high school, when I had my last attack of rebellious religious fervor. I wondered what my reaction would be to him now, I, in my early thirties, a married suburbanite working on Wall Street, preoccupied with sofas and other such material comforts. I still remembered him fondly, but with a touch of grown-up impatience. I thought I'd find him boring now, completely implausible.

But no. I didn't. The book was still wonderful, engaging, and quirky; reading it was a joy, like revisiting a favored old vacation spot or chatting with a long-lost friend. I was amazed at how much I remembered, and delighted by the passages I'd forgotten: that compelling weird story about the end of the world! And it all made me think sadly about the old idealism and hope I once possessed, about that noble desire to reject materialism and greed and selfishness. How things have changed! The brand of hair color I use tells me I'm "worth it," the women's magazines I read tell me I deserve to be pampered, I'm entitled to the best. But am I? Blue, I reflected, would have nothing but disdain for this modern, demanding me.

There was a crucial difference, however, in this re-reading. I found myself strongly identifying this time with the book's narrator. It was this unseen, unknown friend—presumably Mr. Connolly himself—who came bursting out at me, as clearly as Blue did to my twelve-year-old self. This man seemed far more real and believable than his rather fantastic friend—a "normal" workaday man, patient, sympathetic, at turns wry and irritated and admiring, but always genuinely concerned, caring, about his unorthodox friend. Haven't most of us had such a "crazy" friend or relation whom we loved to distraction, whose drives and ambition and flaws unnerved us, yet made us ache with pity and concern? Perhaps this was the real lesson of *Mr. Blue:* tolerance, patience, enduring friendship. Blue, for all his holy speeches and ultimate act of charity—giving up his life to save another's—seemed a little self-absorbed, turned inward. The narrator cared about his friend, and worried over him. Certainly, we need more St. Francises, but also brothers and sisters who look out for such people, who care and nurture and simply put up with them.

I would recommend *Mr. Blue* to anyone. The book is sixty years old this year, yet its message of joyful poverty is especially timely for this cold, sensible, acquisitive decade. But there's only one thing I long to know: Is Mr. Blue fiction, or is he real? □

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's Moment of Truth
Edgar Lockwood
Foreword by *Allan A. Boesak*

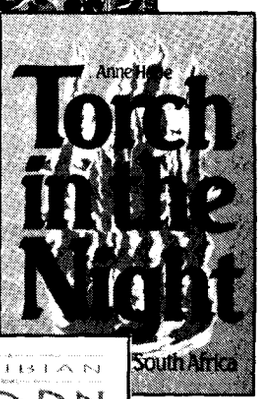
Reveals the historical origins of the current situation, analyzes the myths, and shares the voices of South African people, both black and white. Includes photos and maps.

"... a great deal of information presented in an intelligent and understandable fashion."
—Allan A. Boesak

Paper, 196 pages, $5.95

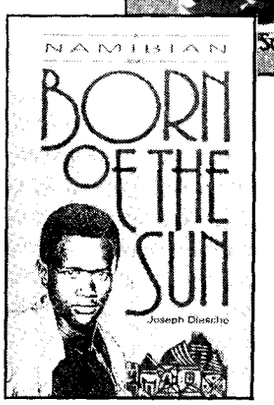
Until We Are Free
Study Guide to *South Africa's Moment of Truth*
John and *Patricia de Beer*

Nine study sessions for adults and older youth. Includes worship plans.
Paper, 40 pages, $3.95



Torch in the Night
Worship Resource from South Africa
Anne Hope

Rituals, stories, poems, art, and responsive readings directly from South Africa. Twelve thematic, adaptable worship services to impart courage and inspire action. A rich and transforming resource.
Paper, 144 pages, $5.95



Born of the Sun
A Namibian Novel
Joseph Diescho

The gripping story of Muronga, a young, black Namibian struggling against apartheid. Diescho makes the theoretical real as he weaves a story you won't soon forget.
Paper, 313 pages, $6.95
Cloth, 313 pages, $14.95

Available at bookstores or from

Friendship Press Distribution Office
P.O. Box 37844, Cincinnati, OH 45222-0844

Direct orders add $1 shipping per book.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Richter scale can be handy

WHEAT THAT SPRINGETH GREEN
J.F. Powers
Alfred A. Knopf, $18.95, 335 pp.

Walter H. Clark, Jr.

Twenty-six years ago *Commonweal* reviewer Thomas Conley called J.F. Powers's long-awaited first novel, *Morte D'Urban,* the work of a master. *Wheat That Springeth Green,* his second novel, fifth book, is likewise the work of a master and, like *Morte D'Urban,* a comedy of spiritual salvation played out in the story of a priest.

Father Joe Hackett, son of a prosperous coal dealer, thinks of becoming a priest from an early age. The story follows him through seminary and enthusiasm for contemplation, on into the realities of a parish curacy, and a staff position in Diocesan Charities. Looking back at his spiritual development, he worries over the loss of youthful idealism and certainty, "...you never knew where you were in the spiritual life; that was the hell of it—only God knew, Joe's hope had to be that he was, without knowing it, a sleeper."

At age forty-four, he is pastor of the Church of Saints Francis and Clare, Inglenook, a comfortable suburban parish, for which he has built a school, convent, and rectory. ("Just as the heart of the church is the altar, he'd say, so the heart of the rectory is, or should be, the office.") He pays for these achievements in loneliness and drink and seems to be headed for spiritual drought.

What saves Joe Hackett, or provides the occasion for his saving himself, is the arrival of his new curate, Father Bill, a priest of the sixties, whose naiveté masks a sweetness and generosity of spirit that rekindle the older man. Father Joe thinks of himself as guiding and instructing Bill, but it is actually through Bill, and his concern for Bill, that Joe comes back into contact with his vocation and his fellow man. (In the words of a habitual telephone pest who identifies himself as Lyndon B. Johnson, "*You* should be *his* assistant.") As the novel ends, we find Joe, having been "gently purged and ardently moved," volunteering for a thorny post in the inner city.

But this is not only a comedy of spiritual salvation. It's full of ridiculous incident, humorous characters, slapstick, and word play. When Monsignor Toohey, a two-bit Chancery ogre, withholds from Father Joe the name of his new curate, Joe's attempts to find out, without revealing what it is he doesn't know, lead to hilarious complications. And Joe's diplomatic endeavors to avoid being drawn into a war between the Mall merchants and the local discount house are worthy of a Kissinger.

As for character, what starts as caricature often ends as portrait, a Powers trademark. Here is Joe's view of Father Felix, who helps out on Sundays:

> The monk, whose glasses still needed changing, still held the paper open in front of him, as far away from him as he could, so that it was like the prow of a ship, until his arms gave out and the whole thing came crashing down in his lap—this was hard on the paper. Instead of smoothing it out while waiting for the strength to be restored to his arms, he cocked his head back and read what he could of the text in its collapsed and crumpled condition, the salient items or sentences thereof, noisily wrenching up more, shifting and tightening his grip like a dog with a bone—this was hard on the paper.

J.F. Powers in 1979

The picture is one of charming simplicity, yet Father Felix preaches sermons straight out of the middle-European peasant imagination, spreading panic among impressionable adolescents in the parish. Who is this mild-mannered monk?

Other colorful clergymen come and go, their intrigues and nicknames like decorative threads in a tapestry. Monsignor "Catfish Toohey," Joe's antagonist since grade school, "Lefty Beeman," the eternal curate, forever seeking his own parish, forever affronting the authorities at the wrong moment, "Dollar Bill" Stock, who insists on a special collection at Joe's first Mass, and whose retirement purse is unanimously boycotted by his congregation. Then there is Father Van Slaag (known to his housekeeper as "Slug"), who has "horny grey growths on his knees" from praying, and permits the housekeeper's dog to bite his ankles—which finally persuades young Father Joe that he is not cut out for the contemplative life.

Someone once asked Powers why he restricted himself by writing about Catholic clergy, and he replied that it made for stronger beer. The metaphor seems appropriate for a novelist whose

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books to Inform & Inspire

CONSCIENCE AND CONFLICT, A Trilogy of One-Actor Plays: Thomas Merton, Pope John XXIII, Martin Luther, *by Anthony Padovano.* A comparison of three significant figures in the history of the church and their role in its reform presented in the form of plays, together with study questions at the end of each selection. Paper $7.95

THE DESIRES OF THE HUMAN HEART, An Introduction to the Theology of Bernard Lonergan, *edited by Vernon Gregson.* A collection of articles examining the thought of one of the greatest theologians of the 20th century. Paper $12.95

GOD'S BREATH AND OTHER STORIES, *James O'Connor.* A collection of ten short stories in the style of Flannery O'Connor which point to a loving God who is saving the world even in the midst of our sin and chaos. Paper $6.95

GOD WITHIN, The Mystical Tradition of Northern Europe, *Oliver Davies.* A one-volume introduction and overview of the great mystical writers of the late medieval period. Paper $9.95

JOSIAH ROYCE, Selected Writings, *edited by John E. Smith and William Kluback.* Every significant aspect of Josiah Royce's philosophical achievement is carefully and fully treated, with special emphasis on his contribution as the philosopher of spirituality. [Sources of American Spirituality Series.] Cloth $24.95

THE LORD'S DEALING, The Primacy of the Feminine in Christian Spirituality, *Robert Faricy, S.J.* Uses principles developed by Teilhard de Chardin to explore the role of the feminine in Christian spirituality. Paper $6.95

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS AND THEOLOGY OF MIRACLES, *Rene Latourelle.* A study of the miracles of Jesus in the Gospels and their relevance for contemporary belief. Paper $14.95

MORNING LIGHT, The Spiritual Journal of Jean Sulivan, *Jean Sulivan, translated by Joseph Cunneen and Patrick Gormally.* A collection of essays that illustrate the personal and inspirational view of Christianity held by this French priest-author, who was hailed as "a prophet for our times" by *Le Monde.* Paper $12.95

OUT OF CHAOS, Refounding Religious Congregations, *Gerald Arbuckle.* A scholarly, well-researched text that show how chaos can be the catalyst for new religious life creativity. Paper $9.95

PARTNERS IN INTIMACY, Living Christian Marriage Today, *Challon O'Hearn Roberts and William P. Roberts.* Provides practical insights into the meaning of marriage, as well as concrete suggestions on how to work toward a more enriched relationship. Paper $8.95

RICHARD ROLLE, The English Writings, *edited by Rosamund S. Allen.* A translation of the major prose works, several of the ascribed lyrics, and a selection of the commentaries written in English by this fourteenth century mystical writer. [Classics of Western Spirituality Series]. Cloth $16.95; Paper $12.95

THE SIX DAYS OF DESTRUCTION, Meditations Toward Hope, *Elie Wiesel and Albert H. Friedlander.* Six stories of the Holocaust and two liturgies for Christian Jewish remembrance. Cloth $9.95; Paper $4.95

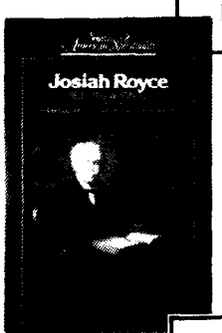
THE STORY OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, Three People, Four Days, Many Miracles, *J. Janda.* The story of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe told for elementary school children; charmingly illustrated with line drawings. Paper $2.95

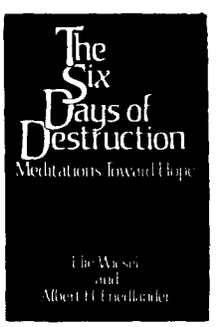
WHAT MEN ARE LIKE, *John A. Sanford and George Lough.* A popular, non-technical treatment of masculine psychology from the Jungian perspective. Paper $12.95

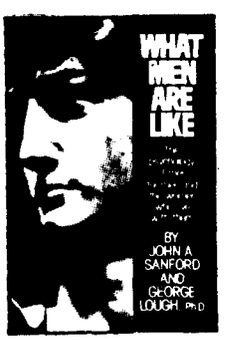
THE BOY JESUS GOES A-WALKING AND OTHER STORIES, *Mary Richardson, illustrated by Hilda Joanna.* Full color illustrations add to the richness of these stories of Jesus as a youngster, as a Healer of the Blind, as a friend to the tax-collector, Zaccheaus. Paper $4.95

IT HAPPENED AT CHRISTMAS AND OTHER STORIES, *Mary Richardson, illustrated by Hilda Joanna.* These stories celebrating the First Christmas include *It Happened at Christmas. Shepherds at Bethlehem,* and *The Wise Men Follow the Star.* Paper $4.95

THE KING'S DONKEY AND OTHER STORIES, *Mary Richardson, illustrated by Hilda Joanna.* Stories include *The King's Donkey* (chosen to carry Jesus to Jerusalem), a story of children and Jesus, and one of Jesus and His fishermen. Fully illustrated. Paper $4.95







Available at your local bookstore or

Paulist Press • 997 Macarthur Blvd., Mahwah, NJ 07430 • 201-825-7300

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

underlying subject is the life of the spirit. The problem Powers sets himself is not so much writing about priests, as writing about spiritual realities in an age that ignores them. Part of his approach is to be up front with the venalities and vulgarities attendant upon institutional religion, while recording without comment unnoticed spiritual changes that take place like movements in the crust of the earth. Amusing as *Wheat* is to read, it has an underlying lapidary toughness, a seriousness of purpose. First impressions and last impressions are quite different things in the reading of Powers's novels, and a Richter scale can be handy.

Readers of *Morte D'Urban* will wonder whether *Wheat* is not simply more of the same, but the two priests are two completely different people who probably would not warm to one another. Father Urban is smarter and more verbal, Joe steadier. Urban struggles with the world and the devil, Joe with the flesh and the world. Urban's salvation comes with a sacramental crash, Joe's comes through priestly fellowship and friction with his curate. (In *Wheat* we see a number of curates given priority over their pastors.) Both Urban and Joe come out better than we think they deserve at a certain point in our reading. This may occasion some puzzlement, until we not only give grace its due, but realize the extent to which these men cooperate with the grace given them. □

THE DEVELOPING GUTIERREZ

A THEOLOGY OF LIBERATION
15th Anniversary Edition
Gustavo Gutierrez
Orbis Books, $21.95, $11.95 paper, 264 pp.

Dennis P. McCann

"My book is a love letter to God, to the church, and to the people to which I belong. Love remains alive, but it grows deeper and changes its manner of expression." With more than a hint of the poet in him, Gustavo Gutierrez thus aptly concludes the new "Introduction" to the anniversary edition of what promises to be his classic, *A Theology of Liberation*. The loves that Gutierrez confesses were never in question; but the change in his manner of expression could be. After fifteen years, his language has mellowed as this lover of the church more carefully stakes out a claim to orthodoxy. But what of these other loves? What of God and the people? Do they now stand betrayed by his explicit quest for ecclesiastical fidelity?

The original text has not been touched, but for two telling exceptions. The first is a bow in the direction of linguistic revisionism, by which apparently sexist abstractions like "man" must now be rendered in such appropriately inclusive terms as "humanity." Nor is this simply a convention for the Peruvian theologian, for in the new Introduction he tries several times to take account of feminist perspectives in and on Latin America.

The other change in the text is, perhaps, more controversial. What once had been offered straightforwardly as "Christian Fellowship and Class Struggle" has been substantially rewritten as "Faith and Social Conflict." Here, too, the change is in the direction of inclusiveness, but ironically one that opens up a critical distance between liberation theology and Marxism. Social conflict yields a variety of explanations, and the Marxist ideology of class struggle is only one of them. This, too, is consistent with the new Introduction, for Gutierrez there indicates that in principle he does not disagree with the Vatican's two instructions on liberation theology and their warnings about Marxist methodology, but welcomes them as a constructive contribution to "the inevitable clarification of this theological undertaking."

The mellowing of Gutierrez's theological language indicated here makes for a series of subtle but profoundly significant shifts in his way of expressing the meaning of praxis and liberation, which inevitably affect the meaning of the preferential option for the poor, as well as the mission of the church in response to it. With fifteen years' additional pastoral experience behind him, Gutierrez now finds it necessary to emphasize caution against reductive and purely "immanentist" understandings of praxis and liberation. The new Introduction explains both terms in an explicitly and more consistently orthodox manner. Though liberating praxis still "endeavors to transform history," this transformation is not reducible to changes in socioeconomic structures.

When Gutierrez wishes to emphasize the theological meaning of liberation, he consistently speaks of an "integral liberation" which is open to "the gratuitousness of God's love as the first and last word in biblical revelation." He now makes it clear that the connections among the three levels of liberation, as outlined in the original edition, are governed by the "conception of human nature" accepted as normative by the mainstream of Catholic social teaching. Liberation theology's option for the poor, which Gutierrez tries to equate with John Paul II's "love of preference" for the poor, is grounded not in social analysis or human compassion but, "in the final analysis, in the God of our faith." The role of the church, therefore, is to strive for an "authentic universality" that seeks to overcome our social divisions by humbly confronting them with the Gospels.

With none of these theological clarifications does Gutierrez actually contradict his original covenant with God and his people, but the shifts of emphasis do seem to amount to a very large practical difference: Gutierrez concludes the revised section on "Faith and Social Conflict" by repudiating the attempt to identify the option for the poor with any ideology or specific political program. Assuming that he means what he says, Gutierrez's liberation theology, there-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fore, can no longer be understood primarily as a form of political theology.

The point of this theology is not to make a theological case for, in Paul Tillich's words, the decision of socialism for socialism. The accent here falls less on such large political questions than on the struggle to form authentically Christian communities of faith. Consistent with his later writings, the new Introduction exhibits a deep sensitivity to the inarticulate spiritual concerns of God's silent majority, and in light of these concerns the central question for liberation theology now stands clarified: "How is it possible to tell the poor, who are forced to live in conditions that embody a denial of love, that God loves them?" How, indeed, inasmuch as Gutierrez's theological commitment grows, while his skepticism over ideology and politics deepens. What might appear in political terms as a betrayal of commitment, here can be appreciated as an uncompromisingly spiritual quest for the kind of fidelity that will allow all three of Gutierrez's loves to reach their fulfillment. In this case, the mellowing inevitably marked by anniversaries truly does deserve to be celebrated. □

THE POISE OF THE JUGGLER

THE GREEN DARK
Marie Ponsot
Alfred A. Knopf, $16.95 70 pp.

Eavan Boland

These are poems of a deceptive restraint. They are deeply personal, yet they avoid being a private language. They level with the reader in areas of haunting intensity. But just when they seem about to be scarred with the honesty they demand and engage, the language takes on the delightful showiness of the lyric event: applerinds are made to redden in flowering orchards; dreams are "a windbreak for retrieval and repair." What is more, this language never becomes cloying, because Marie Ponsot suspends it so often in a music dark with irony.

One poem, in particular, in *The Green Dark* seems almost an autobiography for the poetic statement in general. It is called "Wearing the Gaze of an Archaic Statue" and it evokes the poise of the juggler, discovering her art through her skill; a process which, as I hope to suggest later, Marie Ponsot has a singular understanding of and affinity with. The juggler aims for both balance and composure, and finds both by her instinctive cooperation with forces greater than herself. It is a wonderful paradigm. In an especially graceful phrase, the juggler is said to be wearing a "suit of nerve." She is also "on her own here." At one point in the poem, her performance is described in adroit metaphysical negatives: "her small, touching skill is/holding nothing." She is involved in "a phase of the great legislation/she proposes to obey."

There is something happening here which is almost magical in its effect and characteristic enough of this poet as to appear almost to be her signature. Again and again, Marie Ponsot makes poems which start with images of a concrete and private intensity and then circles them with abstractions and ideas and returns, on that route, to the puritan imagination, which will neither deny the force of the private experience nor allow it to remain in secular isolation. This maneuver is characteristic of the depth and worth of this book. It characterizes Marie Ponsot's engagement with her world. It also leads her out of her text into her context.

Like all fine poetry, Marie Ponsot's work belongs not just to its own private agenda, nor even to the durable themes it engages through that agenda. It takes its place in the contemporary debate within

SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Celebrating 100 Years of Scholarship
Join This Tradition in a Second Century

THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

Systematic Theology
John T. Ford, John Galvin, Patrick Granfield, Elizabeth Johnson, Gregory Malanowski, Carl Peter, Peter Phan

Sacramental and Liturgical Theology
Gerard Austin, Kevin Irwin, David N. Power

Scripture
Christopher Begg, Frank Matera

Moral Theology
Thomas C. Kane, William May

Patristics
Robert Eno, Robin Darling

Spirituality
James Wiseman

Pastoral Studies
Richard DeLillio, Charles Gravenstine, Douglas Morrison, Mires Stine

Degrees Programs offered in the Department of Theology include the S.T.B., S.T.L., S.T.D.; M.A., Ph.D.; M.Div., and D.Min.

Programs are enriched by cross-registration with the Departments of Biblical Studies, Canon Law, Church History, Religion and Religious Education, and with the Washington Theological Consortium.

Scholarships Available

For Further Information Please Write:
Office of the Dean
School of Religious Studies
The Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C. 20064
(202) 635-5683

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The juggler in her suit of nerve is
eyes and hands. The rest of her
dangles . . . she is holding nothing.
She is on her own here;
she is not just letting go,
and her small touching skill is:
holding nothing. —Marie Ponsot
The Green Dark

American poetry; and, of course, in taking its place it also takes its stand.

To practice is to take a chance on
joy, I think.
The one use of what they do is skill;
skill
works against limits to cancel out
sloppiness, tedium and some pain;
one skill is plenty; taken to the full
is morning swallow-soaring,
easily
voicing the sounds of inner
rejoicing in its readiness.

These are lines from a poem called "Gliding" in Marie Ponsot's earlier book *Admit Impediment*. Even the most preliminary reading of this will show that she is a poet of real consistency. Because of this, her poems enter the current discourse about poetry in America at a particularly vital point.

But is there such a discourse? An irritable reader might point to a welter of echoes and voices in contemporary American poetry and doubt that any poet can be more than part of the cacophony. In fact, the debate in a poetic community is always more coherent and sustained than it appears. The poetry in *The Green Dark* is sober and candid and bright. It is also committed. At a moment in American poetry when, from the outside, there can seem to be a real unease about the relation of art to skill, Marie Ponsot's work, in the space of time it occupies, heals that division and refreshes that tension. Poems like "Wearing the Gaze of an Archaic Statue" and "Gliding" in her earlier book—and other poems in *The Green Dark*—are saying very insistently, there is no rift between art and skill; that is illusion and superstition.

This is a book with wonderful successes in it. And there are flaws; of course there are. At times the lineation lacks the necessity and force the language calls for. A line can seem to turn a corner, then turn another one, then falter like someone caught in a warren of modern offices. In the meantime the momentum these poems have at their best has been lost. At other times both language and image become too busy in the service of the intelligence behind them. But this, in a very real sense, is carping. Poems as ambitious as these are bound to have complex failures to go with their complex aspirations.

I prefer to record the winners. The first section, for instance, which is titled "The Story of the Problems" is a marvelous study in the purposes of this poetry. Poems called "The Problem of the Experimental Method" and "The Problem of Social Growth" neither invite nor inveigle. Yet when they are read, they are fresh and musical and rewarding. The beautiful, long poem "Take Time, Take Place," in the third section of the book, is a moving sequence. Its own third section, composed of sonnets, is particularly successful. But this is a book full of discoveries. In many ways it is a speculation on poetry itself; and it enriches the object of its speculation. □

REVENGE OF THE CHIPPEWA WITCH

TRACKS
Louise Erdrich
Henry Holt, $17.95, 226 pp.

Christopher Vecsey

Tracks is Louise Erdrich's third novel of rural North Dakota. *Love Medicine* (1984) delineated a frayed line of Chippewa Indian lives in contemporary America. *The Beet Queen* (1986) portrayed a braid of their struggling, non-Indian neighbors of a generation or two ago. Both books were hung together by lyrical threads that highlighted and augmented the bleak and painful stuff of the stories wherein the lives of these peoples were intertwined. Both were masterworks.

Tracks brings the reader back to the early years of this century, 1912-1924, and it ties a knot of narrative around the previous novels. The style maintains the densely spiritual quality of her earlier work, resembling in some ways the "magical realism" of Gabriel Garcia Márquez, and reveals some important history of the characters who people this rural world Ms. Erdrich is creating, or unraveling, before our eyes.

The narrative technique reveals the structure of the plot that in itself means to set forward the oppositional strands of twentieth-century Chippewa existence. Old Nanapush narrates half the chapters. Old Nanapush, named for the trickster-transformer of aboriginal Chippewa myth, upholder of the ancient, living traditions: the medicines, the hunting and trapping acumen, the land-related ethos, the familiar world view. Some might call him a liar like his namesake, but his lies and truths are tied and committed to ways that have served and survived the centuries' generations.

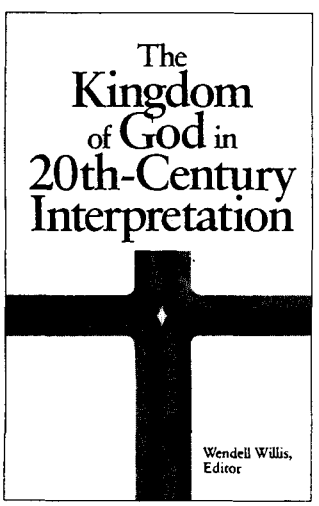
Pauline's chapters alternate with those of Nanapush. She is a half-breed. She lives for a time in the grubby Anglo town of Argus, away from the reservation. She returns, engages in lovemaking and love magic, receives or imagines a vision of the Virgin, gives birth, joins the convent, skins off her Indian ancestry, practices intense self-abnegation, and wages warfare against the Indian pagans who were formerly her associates, allies, and protectors. She, too, is called a liar; her lies and truths are tied and committed to a baroque and austere mission-house Catholicism.

Nanapush and Pauline engage in alternating narrative combat—his lies, her lies—as the white world inserts its roads

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Works in Theology and Biblical Studies

from Hendrickson Publishers



THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN 20TH-CENTURY INTERPRETATION
Wendell Willis, Editor

Perhaps no theological issue has generated as much discussion in New Testament scholarship as the "Kingdom of God."

This collection of fourteen essays by leading biblical scholars examines the concept of the kingdom of God in non-Christian literature, analyzes its role in early Christianity, and surveys the contemporary discussion of this issue among such 20th century voices as Albert Schweitzer, Johannes Weiss, Rudolf Bultmann, C.H. Dodd, and George Ladd.

This is a very important topic, and the several contributors render us an invaluable service in bringing us up to date on current scholarship and interpretation in their particular assignments. The book is all the more interesting because its agenda is so different from that of some other equally vigorous thrusts today in biblical scholarship.

—Amos N. Wilder
The Harvard Divinity School

Available $12.95

NEW TESTAMENT GREEK
A Beginning and Intermediate Grammar
James A. Hewett

I recently received a copy of New Testament Greek *from Hendrickson Publishers as part of what had seemed an endless quest for a serviceable, introductory grammar. For years, I have been making do by altering the pedagogical order of existing works, supplementing their explanations, and culling examples from the New Testament. This grammar, it seems to me, undertakes the task of introduction in a manner which makes success likely for teacher and student alike.*

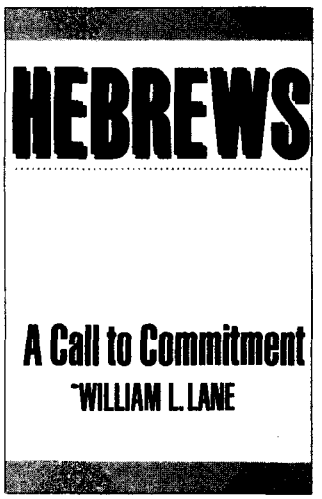
—Bruce Chilton
Yale Divinity School

Available $14.95

HEBREWS
A Call to Commitment
William L. Lane

Dr. William Lane has written a practical, readable, and especially lucid [book] ... for instructing groups in the spiritual treasures of the epistle to the Hebrews.

—Simon Kistemaker
Reformed Theological Seminary



The book is eminently readable ... Each chapter brims over with practical applications ... [it] is positive, challenging, and convicting.

—Craig L. Bloomberg
Denver Seminary

Available $7.95

GRAMMAR OF SEPTUAGINT GREEK
With Selected Readings
F. C. Conybeare and St. George Stock

A reprint of the standard Septuagint grammar originally titled *Selections from the Septuagint*. It has the full text of the original edition including: an introduction to the Septuagint, the grammar proper with major sections covering accidence and syntax, and extensive selected readings with introductory and grammatical notes.

Available $14.95

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE ORIGINAL GREEK
B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort

A reprint of the second of the two-volume classic work by Westcott and Hort titled *The New Testament in the Original Greek*. Includes the Introduction to their work which fully details the need, background, evidences, principles, and methodology of New Testament textual criticism.

Available $19.95

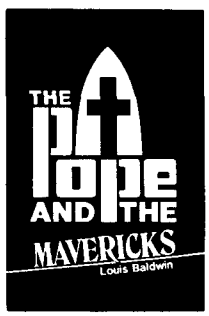
For a complete catalog, write:

HENDRICKSON PUBLISHERS
P.O. Box 3473 • Peabody, MA 01961-3473

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Pope and the Mavericks

by Louis Baldwin

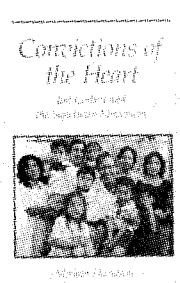


The Catholic Church has had its share of wayward popes and rebellious disciples. Louis Baldwin, a practicing Catholic, writes of mavericks both contemporary and historical in a lively study of Vatican bureaucracy and those who have dared to oppose it.

221 pages • Cloth $19.95

Order toll free (800) 421-0351
In N.Y. State, call (716) 837-2475
Mail to: Prometheus Books
700 East Amherst St., Buffalo, NY 14215
Add $2.25 postage & handling. N.Y. State residents add sales tax.
Order total: $_____ ☐ Payment enclosed
Charge to my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
CARD # _____ EXP: ___/___
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ ST. _____
ZIP _____ TEL.# _____
CMW11/4/88

Inside the Sanctuary Movement



Convictions of the Heart

Miriam Davidson

The story behind the Sanctuary Movement and the man whose activism started it, Jim Corbett. "This is a fine, important book full of murder and terror, heroism and endurance, justice and injustice. Unfortunately, it's a true story." (David Quammen) $19.95.

The University of Arizona Press
1230 N. Park #102, Tucson, AZ 85719
VISA/MC orders, call 1-800-426-3797

into Indian lands, sinks its sawteeth into Indian timber, smothers Indian homes with layers of paper, and poisons Indian souls with printing ink. At the crux of this cultural biformity stands the Chippewa witch, Fleur, the mother of an auditor to whom Nanapush tells his version of the truth. Fleur stands against both worlds, Indian and white, cursing them each in turn, and working fabulous revenge when her times come. She gets no chance at narration, but her vision—as reported by the narrators (and the author)—disallows any romanticizing of either side.

A jaded reader might view the novel as yet another bipolarization of the age-old fight between whites and Indians, a dividing up of the North Dakota landscape into predictable factions. A reviewer might find some of the prose overwrought, and the two narrative voices indistinguishable in their cadences. A materialist might find the flights of Ms. Erdrich's fable too fantastic for suspension of disbelief. Yet readers will appreciate and applaud the vigor and inventiveness of the author in accurately displaying the passions and obsessions of these two opposing views of the world: Indian and white. Louise Erdrich is a Chippewa-German-American, and the world she is describing does more than resemble or evoke the environment and people in and around Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota, where she grew up; it embodies it and brings it to life. □

A NOVEMBER DAY IN DALLAS

LIBRA
Don DeLillo
Viking, $19.95, 456 pp.

Peter LaSalle

Simply enough, Don DeLillo's *Libra* is a novel about Lee Harvey Oswald. It is also a novel about novel writing.

We see Oswald, a libra, and those who supposedly come in contact with him. He goes to a high school in the Bronx, where he is taunted by other kids for being a Texas cracker. He joins the Marines, then later defects to Russia; there he keeps a diary (full of misspellings) cataloguing his own "role" in history, and one evening he attends a government dance and meets a beautiful young Russian woman who becomes his wife. He finds himself in and out of work back in the American South, finally taking the elevator high up in the Texas Schoolbook depository building in Dallas, lunching on chicken and pop, and shooting the president of the United States with a mail-order Italian rifle.

We also see, periodically, a character named Nicholas Branch. He is a retired CIA analyst, now on one last special mission for the agency: to digest a veritable roomful of documents relating to the assassination that happened twenty-five years before and produce a definitive report. Tired, overwhelmed, "Branch thinks this is the megaton novel James Joyce would have written if he'd moved to Iowa City and lived to be a hundred. ...This is the Joycean Book of America, remember—the novel in which nothing is left out." Later in the book, Branch seems even more buried by the task, knowing that he can never produce a perfect document, and knowing too that he can never escape his passion (the novelist's drive?) to get as close to the truth on this subject as is humanly possible with his endless theorizing (novelizing?). "The case will haunt him to the end," Branch realizes.

Needless to say, DeLillo has taken on some hefty issues here. And this book, backed by a lot of advertising and its Book-of-the-Month Club "main selection" status, comes from a man who is certainly one of the more intriguing con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

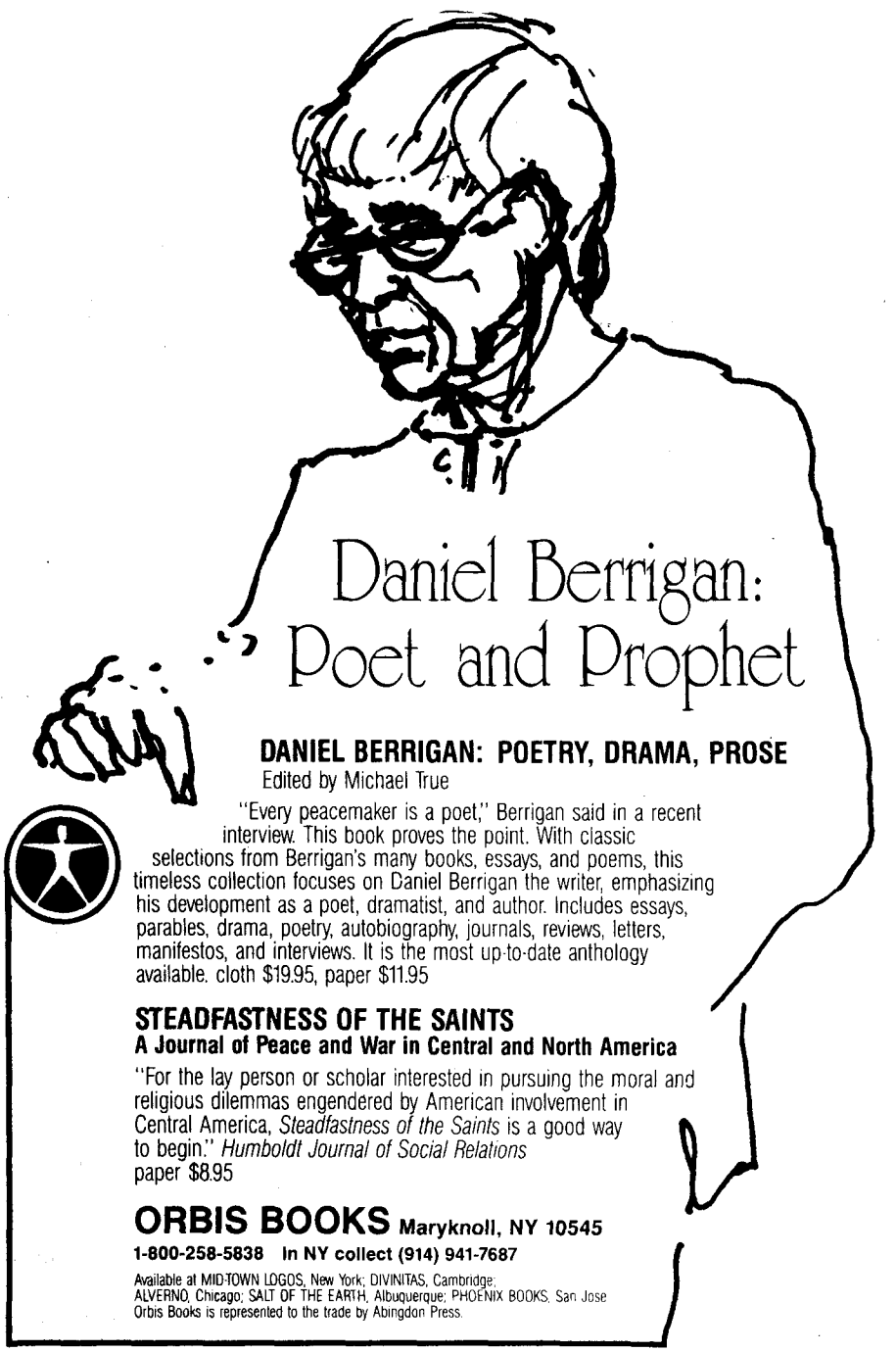
temporary American novelists. He has admittedly written novels that never move beyond their premises (college football as a metaphor for what is wrong with America in *End Zone*, rock-and-roll as a metaphor for the same in *Great Jones Street);* but he has also produced some wonderfully haunting fictions that tell us a good deal about the inexplicable nervousness, the dread, that seems to permeate so much contemporary American life—among them his first novel, *Americana,* about a young television executive, and his last novel, *White Noise,* about a professor of Hitler Studies in a small Midwestern college, plus several fine stories that have appeared in *Esquire,* but never collected.

Libra has some solid moments. Though the sections from Oswald's point of view may turn rather one-dimensional in portraying him as the diminutive loner all his life, those from the points of view of Oswald's mother and Jack Ruby are moving. The basic plot line makes the assassination the mistaken result of a conspiracy organized by a handful of disgruntled CIA men who just want to "scare" Kennedy into taking seriously the fall of Cuba to the Communists, and that as a theory is engaging.

Libra also has some real problems. For me the looming one is its sheer pretension. Early on, the book seems to announce itself as significant because this supposedly *is* the big subject in recent America, one that supposedly *demands* a big novel, as the character Nicholas Branch observes. But overall the package never delivers what fiction must to be successful, what separates it from, let's say, psychology or history: to make us feel that we are indeed living it, that its reality is as real as, or more revealingly real than, our own reality. The art that Branch alludes to—everything that goes into a novelist's craft—simply doesn't effervesce here, and with sketchy, staccato scenes and too much perfunctory characterization, only the premise remains, as happens in the mentioned earlier DeLillo novels.

Sentence-by-sentence the prose itself is more than disappointing, plagued by leaden one-liners ("Dreams sent terrors you could not explain.") and tough-guy spy dialogue that would embarrass even Frederick Forsyth on a bad day; there is a vivid sense of place when Oswald is in New York (which DeLillo surely knows), a sad lack of it when Oswald is in Russia and Texas (which DeLillo obviously doesn't know). In short, yes, this is a story based on fact, but it would take an awful lot of willingness to suspend your disbelief on this version of it.

Joyce wrote the great Joycean novel about some everyday characters, in all their heartbreakingly everyday hopes and sadnesses, going through life on just another June day in Dublin. DeLillo has written a not-so-great novel about some people who are tabloid favorites heading toward that very known November day in Dallas. Maybe something quite essential concerning what good novel writing is all about lies in that juxtaposition—but don't try to convince your literary agent or the Book-of-the-Month Club folks of that. □


Daniel Berrigan:
Poet and Prophet
DANIEL BERRIGAN: POETRY, DRAMA, PROSE
Edited by Michael True
"Every peacemaker is a poet," Berrigan said in a recent interview. This book proves the point. With classic selections from Berrigan's many books, essays, and poems, this timeless collection focuses on Daniel Berrigan the writer, emphasizing his development as a poet, dramatist, and author. Includes essays, parables, drama, poetry, autobiography, journals, reviews, letters, manifestos, and interviews. It is the most up-to-date anthology available. cloth $19.95, paper $11.95
STEADFASTNESS OF THE SAINTS
A Journal of Peace and War in Central and North America
"For the lay person or scholar interested in pursuing the moral and religious dilemmas engendered by American involvement in Central America, Steadfastness of the Saints is a good way to begin." Humboldt Journal of Social Relations
paper $8.95
ORBIS BOOKS Maryknoll, NY 10545
1-800-258-5838 In NY collect (914) 941-7687
Available at MID-TOWN LOGOS, New York; DIVINITAS, Cambridge; ALVERNO, Chicago; SALT OF THE EARTH, Albuquerque; PHOENIX BOOKS, San Jose
Orbis Books is represented to the trade by Abingdon Press.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AN INSIDER LOOKS BACK

REMEMBERING AMERICA
A Voice from the Sixties
Richard Goodwin
Little, Brown, $19.95, 552 pp.

Arthur J. Moore

Will the U.S. ever get over the sixties? The decade of Camelot, the Great Society, civil rights, assassinations, and Vietnam has become such a national obsession that no week passes without a new book, television program, or film appearing to try to fill our seemingly insatiable desire for reminders about that turbulent time.

Most of these books and films do not even pretend to seek understanding but offer entertainment and titillation, thereby increasing the already serious risk that the sixties will become a fad decade rather like the twenties. This not only has continuing political fallout (see George Bush's attack on Michael Dukakis as a "liberal" and Dukakis's admitted desire to model himself on John Kennedy); it is doubtful that the American people will ever come to terms with the issues of that era until they understand them.

Richard Goodwin should be able to help us in that understanding. He was a speech writer and adviser for (in succession) John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Eugene McCarthy, and Robert Kennedy. As such, he had an inside view and some influence on many of the main events of that time. He describes this book as "a record of that experience of public life, recalled as honestly as fallible memory permits. It is not a history or a memoir, an autobiography or a critical analysis. It is an exhortation. It is an exhortation to remembrance, written in hope that by recollecting what we were, we may remember what we can be."

That description is worth quoting in full, even though Mr. Goodwin starts to ascend into his speech-writing mode at the end rather like a priest slipping into chant. It informs us that the author will give us his version of events and that he is pushing a point of view.

Mr. Goodwin's view of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations is not a revisionist one. Indeed, we have a modern version of the Shakespearean chronicle plays with the noble kings (John Kennedy) and princes (Robert Kennedy); a great king (Lyndon Johnson) driven to death and destruction by evil advisers (Rusk, Bundy, McNamara) and his own flaws; an attempt to restore the natural order of things (Eugene McCarthy, Robert Kennedy); and an end of great tragedy and destruction from which the nation has not emerged. All told from the standpoint of a loyal and honest servant.

The only startling revelation in the book is Goodwin's charge that "Lyndon Johnson experienced certain episodes of what I believe to have been paranoid behavior," and his assertion that this belief was shared by others (notably Bill Moyers) who had close and frequent contact with the president. This change in turn has produced attacks on Goodwin and his motives by such Johnson intimates as Jack Valenti. Bill Moyers has kept his own counsel about the matter.

The episodes that Goodwin recounts to prove his charge seem inconclusive; each reader will have to make up his or her own mind. More worth pondering is the fact that of the last five presidents of the United States, three (Johnson, Nixon, Reagan) have been described by at least some of their staff as being emotionally disturbed; the other two (Ford, Carter) were widely regarded as not being quite up to the job.

The charges and countercharges around this episode do raise questions about the author's claim that the record is "recalled as honestly as fallible memory

THE INSTITUTE AT BOSTON COLLEGE

Welcomes you to historic New England for Summer 1989

TO ENJOY UNIQUE INTELLECTUAL, CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC RESOURCES

Two-Week Courses June 26-August 4, 1989

- **Bernhard Anderson** — Understanding the Old Testament
- **Thea Bowman** — Styles of Prayer (Workshop)
- **Mary Boys** — Traditions of Religion and Education
- **Don Browning** — Religion, Ethics and the Life Cycle
- **Howard Clinebell** — Healing Family Brokenness: Wholeness-Centered Counseling Methods for the 90's
- **Bernard Cooke** — Christology
- **Lawrence Cunningham** — Theology of Church
- **Robert Drinan** — Religion, Society and Human Rights (6-9 pm)
- **Regis Duffy** — Sacramental Theology
- **Ann Louise Gilligan** — Religious Education and Imagination
- **Thomas Groome** — The Education of Christians: Past, Present & Future
- **Gustavo Gutierrez** — The Spirituality of Liberation (6-9 pm)
- **Paul Hanson** — Covenant and Community in the Biblical Tradition
- **Stanley Hauerwas** — Fundamental Ethics
- **Aidan Kavanagh** — Liturgical Theology
- **Claire Lowery** — Integrative Colloquium
- **John Meier** — Paul's Epistle to the Romans
- **Margaret Miles** — Spirituality, History and Contemporary Challenge
- **Peter Steinfels/Margaret O'Brien Steinfels** — The Christian in the World: Economics, Education, Peace

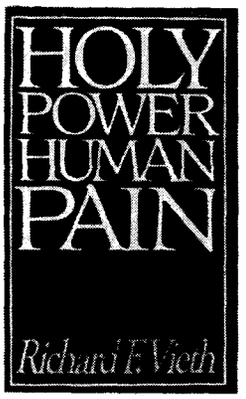
Also Available: Academic Year Degree and Non-Degree Programs (M.A., M.Ed., C.A.E.S.); Sabbatical Renewal Program; On-Campus Air Conditioned Apartments with Kitchen; Substantial Financial Aid for Degree Students

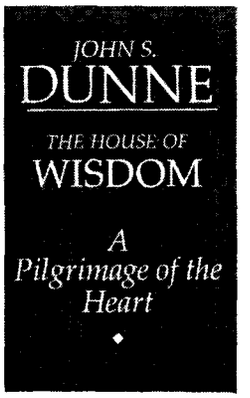
For Further Information: Institute of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry
Boston College, Department R
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167
(617) 552-8440

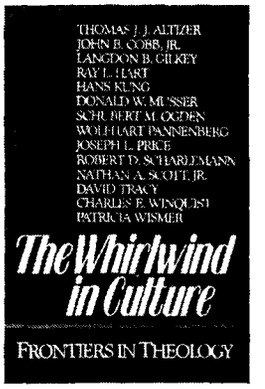
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

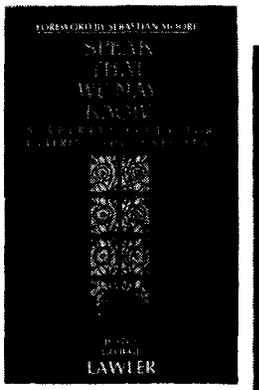
Fall 1988

Meyer ⋎ Stone Books









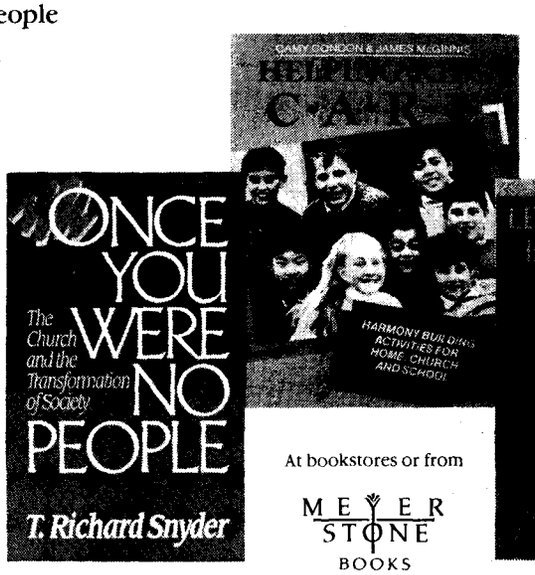
Holy Power, Human Pain
Richard F. Vieth
". . . offers a penetrating look into human pain and divine pain and the interface between the two . . . scholarly yet experientially based, conceptual yet practical, analytical yet inspirational."
—Lyle W. Weible,
Conference President, UCC
Paper, 128 pages, $8.95, -42-5

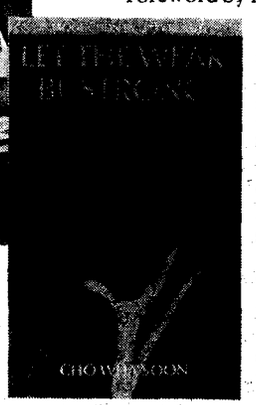
The House of Wisdom
A Pilgrimage of the Heart
John S. Dunne
". . . spiritual writing with a dash of adventure, filled with references to great ideas and grand scenery, blinking with stars and wonder . . . ."
—Ed O'Meara, *Catholic Sentinel*
Paper, 192 pages, $9.95, -38-7

Once You Were No People
The Church and the Transformation of Society
T. Richard Snyder
". . . rare and imaginative, addresses alienation on the socio-political level and on the biblical-theological level . . . . timely and pertinent to the lives of ordinary people."
—Bruce Birch
". . . offers a concreteness about social change that opens new territory."
—Norman K. Gottwald
PB, 160 pp., $9.95, -25-5

The Whirlwind in Culture
Frontiers in Theology
Edited by *Donald W. Musser* and *Joseph L. Price*
A substantive reader structured around the major themes of Langdon Gilkey's fifty years of theological inquiry. New and significant contributions by Hans Küng, David Tracy, and others.
Paper, 288 pages, $19.95, -39-5

Helping Kids Care
Harmony-Building Activities for Home, Church and School
Camy Condon and *James McGinnis*
Chants, skits, puppets, and poems combine to spark giggles, blast stereotypes, and close the chasm between "us and them." Step-by-step directions, easy-to-find props, and inexpensive materials.
Paper, 112 pages, $8.95, -24-7





At bookstores or from

MEYER STONE BOOKS

Speak That We May Know
A Spirituality for Uttering the Inner You
Justus George Lawler
Foreword by *Sebastian Moore*
"This is a contemporary Book of Hours . . . a book that quiets, a book filled with grace—a book that I have already re-read."
—Lee Zahner-Roloff
Northwestern University
Paper, 96 pages, $7.95, -41-7

The Future is Mestizo
Life Where Cultures Meet
Virgil Elizondo
"Virgil Elizondo's poignant and moving story of his faith journey is a modern-day epistle with a powerful message of conversion and respect for the dignity of all God's people."
—Elinor R. Ford
Paper, 128 pages, $7.95, -28-X

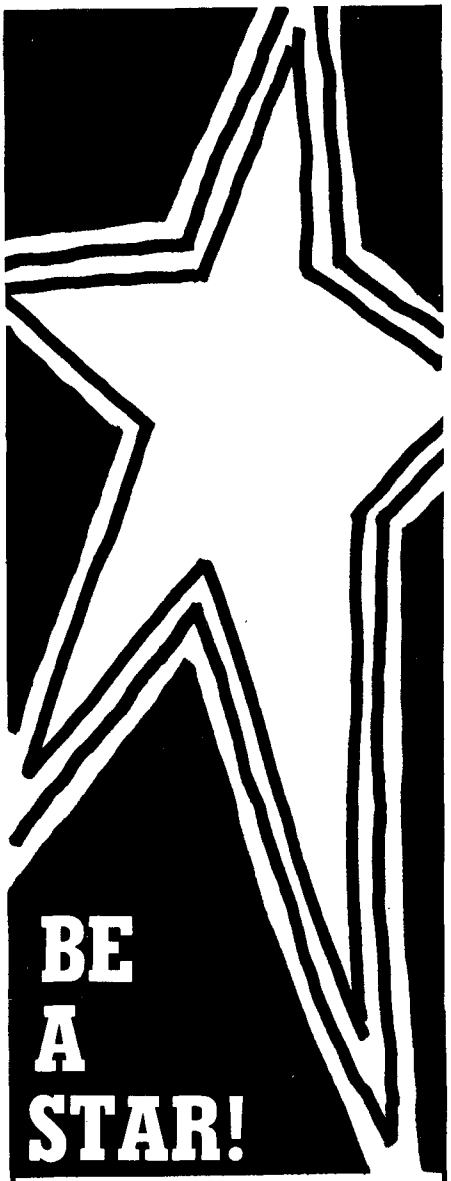
Let the Weak Be Strong
A Woman's Struggle for Justice
Cho Wha Soon
Edited by *Lee Sun Ai, Ahn Sang Nim*
Foreword by *Letty M. Russell*
". . . a vivid story of the pain and triumph of breaking away from privilege . . . a story of loyalty and compassion among Korean women in dehumanizing conditions. It is also a lesson in standing in solidarity."
—Mercy Oduyoye
The book includes the insights of members of the Korean Association of Women Theologians.
PB, 176 pp., $8.95, -37-9

2014 South Yost Avenue, Bloomington, IN 47403 (812) 333-0313 (Direct orders please add $1 shipping per book.)

ISBN Prefix: 0-940989

D104

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Send a gift of
COMMONWEAL to:

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

With notification, as a gift, *from*:

Name

Address 11/4/88

☐ One Year, $32 ☐ Two years, $57

Canadian postage: $2 a year; Foreign $5

COMMONWEAL

15 Dutch St., New York, N.Y. 10038

permits." The "Richard Goodwin" of this book does seem rather too good to be true. Jack Valenti quotes Johnson as saying, "I don't trust him. The Kennedy people tell me...he was a loose cannon, with a loyalty span of about two seconds...." (From internal evidence in Goodwin's book, that sounds as if it might be Ted Sorenson being quoted.) The truth undoubtedly lies somewhere in between, but any person who worked for both Kennedys, Johnson, and Eugene McCarthy certainly has a keen nose for power as well as high ideals.

In general, Goodwin writes well. He is dealing with larger-than-life figures in momentous times. But he quotes his own speeches a lot, and at times displays the faults of a political speech writer. Another weakness is the number of sloppy little errors that run through the book. (Salvador Allende was the head of the Socialist party of Chile, not the Communist party. This from Kennedy's Latin American specialist! When Martin Luther King, Jr., was arrested in Atlanta, Georgia, why would Kennedy's political advisers worry about his interfering "with the judicial system of Alabama"? Doesn't anybody ever check these things?) The unfortunate effect of these small errors is to raise doubts in the reader's mind about the accuracy of larger things.

> *Johnson mused softly . . . "They're trying to get me in a war over there: it will destroy me. I turned them down three times last week." Where? I wondered silently. Not Cuba, Laos or Vietnam, perhaps. . . . But it didn't matter. We had other, more important work to do. We had a mandate, an assignment, which within two months would enter public life as the Great Society.*
>
> —Richard Goodwin
> *Remembering America*

Ultimately, the disappointment of this book is that the viewpoint is so insular. The sixties, after all, did not occur only in the United States, and certainly not only in Washington. It is Goodwin's thesis that Vietnam drove Lyndon Johnson mad and that the U.S. never recovered. As a result, we have turned more and more inward until the country is in danger of irrevocable decline unless we return to the idealism and values of the early sixties. It is an appealing thesis, if only life and national destiny were so simple. Unfortunately, they are not. □

RAGE LACED WITH LYRICISM

A SMALL PLACE
Jamaica Kincaid
Farrar Straus & Giroux, $13.95, 81 pp.

Peggy Ellsberg

Jamaica Kincaid is surely one of the most gifted and original young fiction writers working today. Her two books of fiction, *At the Bottom of the River* (1983), and *Annie John* (1985), were set in Antigua, the Caribbean island where she grew up. In these stories, many of which first appeared in the *New Yorker*, the heat, the sun, the astonishingly blue ocean, the very air so rich with distinctive detail, with foods, fragrances, fabrics, flowers, domestic rituals, and local intimacies, weave a folk art pattern of such interesting complexity that the beloved island becomes a great supporting character for the young protagonist.

In *A Small Place*, Jamaica Kincaid turns her attention to nonfiction, to a sharp personal polemic against exploitation, racism, and corruption. She addresses the change to the uncomfortably familiar second person: "You are a tourist...(to be frank, white)." In this new work, Jamaica Kincaid bursts into a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

different voice—no longer just sassy, but now really angry—and Antigua becomes the main character.

She tells you what you see and what you do not see as you arrive at the airport on the unbelievably beautiful (''too beautiful'') island. ''Antigua is a small place, a small island. It is nine miles wide by twelve miles long. It was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493. Not too long after, it was settled by human rubbish from Europe, who used enslaved but noble and exalted human beings from Africa...to feel better about their own miserable existence, so that they could be less lonely and empty—a European disease.''

We are accustomed, or should be, in this age of raised consciousness, to encountering the resentment of colonized peoples. We should anticipate, not without remorse, the rage of our Central American and Caribbean neighbors who live in deprivation, danger, and despair while the predominantly white North benefits from the systematic assumptions that keep them poor. We should be prepared. But still, we are surprised when Jamaica Kincaid—whose surging, mobile, radical talent has been trained on the most luminous fiction, whose bracing precision is laced with lyricism—opens fire on the privileged white tourist who symbolizes injustice, for here she becomes a sharpshooter with an unflinching hand.

You, the tourist, are ''an ugly, empty thing, a stupid thing...pausing here and there to gaze at this and taste that.'' You do not realize that the delicious, locally-grown food served in your hotel was grown in Antigua, sold to Miami, and then sold back again at enormous profit. Perhaps you are unaware that as you wade blissfully in the beautiful sea, your ankle is being ''gently grazed'' by the contents of the lavatory that you flushed this morning, because these poor islanders have no safe sewage disposal. Perhaps you do not know that the hospital on Antigua is so filthy and run-down that ''when the Minister of Health doesn't feel well he takes the first plane to New York to see a real doctor.'' No doubt ''you are thinking of the hard and cold and dark and long days you spent working in North America (or worse, Europe) earning some money so that you could stay in this place where the sun always shines and the climate is deliciously hot and dry,'' and therefore you will not try to imagine what this is like for ''real Antiguans'' who live in constant drought and must ''watch carefully every drop of fresh water.'' Probably you stumble about in Europe and North America in a large, prosperous city, ''surrounded by more people than you could possibly get to know in a lifetime that lasted for millennia.'' In a small place, on the other hand, certainly in the world Jamaica Kincaid created for Annie John, everyone and everything, for better or worse, is part of you.

Still, not even the intimacy and compressed meanings of a small place are enough to spare its people from misery. Jamaica Kincaid admits that people who

RELIGION IN Perspective
FROM FORTRESS PRESS

FIFTY YEARS OF CATHOLIC THEOLOGY
Conversations with Yves Congar
Edited by Bernard Lauret
In addition to reminiscing about his life's work and Vatican II, Congar offers fresh insights into the meaning of authority and the necessity of dissent, lay ministry and clericalism, liberation theology and Marxism, dialogue with Judaism and Islam, and the future of Christianity. "A marvelous little book I could not put down."—GREGORY BAUM paper $6.95

THE BIBLICAL JOURNEY OF FAITH
The Road of the Sojourner
Frank R. VanDevelder
Here is a tool for appreciating and practicing a biblical model of faith—our life before God and with God. "Utilizing the theme of sojourning, the author moves the reader briskly across the landscape of the Bible, introducing major characters, history, and theology in a refreshing way."—CHRISTOPHER R. SEITZ
paper $8.95

RELIGION AND THE LIFE CYCLE
Robert C. Fuller
Fuller looks to modern psychological theory for descriptions of how religion emerges in the lives of individuals and the role it plays in their psychological development. paper $10.95

DIRT, GREED, AND SEX
Sexual Ethics in the New Testament and Their Implications for Today
L. William Countryman
"The most provocative thing about this book is the ability of the author to get the reader to look at the writings of Scripture on sex in a different way."
—HOWARD STONE cloth $19.95

DEADLY SINS AND SAVING VIRTUES
Donald Capps
Capps draws on Erikson's life cycle theory, biblical narratives, and the Beatitudes to show how individuals can combat the deadly sins by cultivating saving virtues. paper $10.95

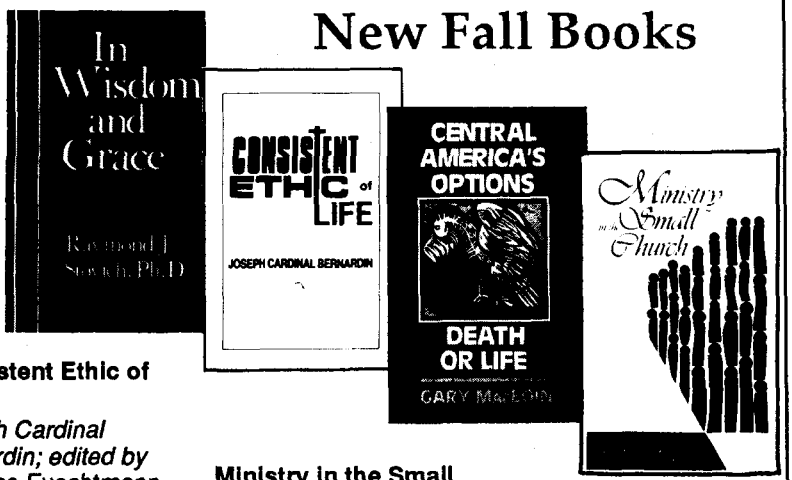
Now in paperback
RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND THE MODERN PSYCHOLOGIES
A Critical Conversation in the Theology of Culture
Don S. Browning
"The range and critical acuteness of this work deserve the attention of all theologians."—DAVID TRACY paper $12.95

At bookstores or from
FORTRESS PRESS
2900 Queen Lane
Philadelphia, PA 19129
DIAL 1-800-FORTRESS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sheed & Ward

New Fall Books



Consistent Ethic of Life
Joseph Cardinal Bernardin; edited by Thomas Fuechtmann

Ten major addresses by Cardinal Bernardin on a broad range of life issues, with commentary by scholars Richard McCormick, SJ, John C. Finnis, James M. Gustafson, and J. Bryan Hehir, from the Consistent Ethic of Life Symposium at Loyola-Chicago.

1-55612-120-2, 240 pp., pb, **$12.95**

Celibacy: Renewing the Gift, Releasing the Power
Raymond J. Gunzel, sP

A book to break through the cliches about celibacy and help bring a new basic understanding of the gift of celibacy—a gift that is essentially a statement of a spiritual relationship with the God of Life.

1-55612-197-0, 128 pp., pb, **$8.95**

Ministry in the Small Church
David G. Andrews, C.S.C. (ed.)

The Rural Ministry Collegium explores the unique conditions of rural parish life, presenting pastoral and theological dialogue on the vision of effective Catholic ministry small communities.

1-55612-106-7,150 pp., pb, **$8.95**

In Wisdom and Grace: Reflections on Psychology and Aging
Raymond J. Stovich

A *multi-disciplinary* work, including experiential exercises, focusing on the meaning of human life from the perspective of the living realities of growing old.

1-55612-115-6, 150 pp., pb, **$8.95**

Yeshua: A Model for Moderns
Leonard Swidler

A biblical scholar presents a popular introduction to the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth as a model for living an authentic human life.

1-55612-182-2, 160 pp., pb, **$8.95**

Central America's Options: Death or Life
Gary MacEoin

A disturbing and challenging account of the explosive situation in Central America, from veteran journalist Gary MacEoin..

1-55612-066-4,130 pp., pb, **$4.95**

At your bookstore,
or order directly from
Sheed & Ward
P.O. Box 414292
Kansas City, MO 64141-4292
MC/VISA orders call **1-800-333-7373**
In Canada: B. Broughton Co., Ltd.
2105 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON M4C 1K1

are too poor to live decently at home and too poor to travel envy to the verge of hatred those tourists rich enough "to leave their own banality and boredom" and find pleasure and exotica in the ordinary life of others. In the end, masters and slaves, we are all locked into the same human condition. The trick is to be aware of it, to open your mind and conscience. "Of course, the whole thing is, once you cease to be a master, once you throw off your master's yoke, you are no longer human rubbish, you are just a human being, and all that that adds up to." □

REVIEWERS

WALTER H. CLARK, JR., *teaches in the Residential College and co-directs the New England literature program at the University of Michigan.*

DENNIS P. McCANN *teaches religious social ethics at DePaul University in Chicago. He is the author of* New Experiment in Democracy: The Challenge for American Catholicism.

EAVAN BOLAND *is a Dublin-born poet and critic whose most recent volume of poems,* The Journey, *was published last year. A new collection of selected poems is due in 1989.*

CHRISTOPHER VECSEY *teaches religion and Native American studies at Colgate University. His books include* Traditional Ojibwa Religion and Its Historical Changes, Iriquois Land Claims, *and, most recently,* Imagine Ourselves Richly: Mythic Narratives of North American Indians *(Crossroad).*

PETER LaSALLE, *author of a novel,* Strange Sunlight, *and a story collection,* The Graves of Famous Writers, *is currently a visiting professor at the University of Paris, Nanterre.*

ARTHUR J. MOORE, *a long-time contributor to* Commonweal, *is a contributing editor of* Christianity & Crisis. *He was for many years editor of* New World Outlook, *the mission magazine of the United Methodist church.*

PEGGY ELLSBERG *teaches English at Barnard College in Manhattan.*

Correction

In Robert E. Hosmer's review of Muriel Spark's *A Far Cry from Kensington* [October 7], the meaning of his last

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

paragraph (p.532) was damaged when several sentences were deleted. After the phrase, "to persuade people to accept it," the text should have read: "Moreover, Mrs. Spark's evident inability to accept Mrs. Hawkins's wisdom, or her deliberate choice to reject it out of hand, provokes two tantalizing questions: Upon whom is Hector Bartlett based? Why after more than forty years does this novelist decide to settle a score against him? *A Far Cry from Kensington* gives more clues than necessary to hazard an educated guess about Hector Bartlett's identity, and more pleasure than lunch in a castle where Dante once slept."

We apologize for a mix-up on the cover of the October 21 issue: Michael J. Himes reviewed *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent*; the book by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism, and Politics*, was reviewed by Joseph A. Komonchak.

THE EDITORS

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 578)

Dictionary of Theology edited by Joseph A. Komonchak and Mary Collins, O.S.B. As one often called upon to translate theological articles from the Spanish, I was hoping that it would help me when I struggle to find an English equivalent for the Spanish terminology. But I see that, first, the book is not a "dictionary" and second, that though its aim is "to provide 'an intelligent and critical introduction to Catholic theology in our day,' " it includes nothing from Latin America where liberation theology was born. Are Gustavo Gutierrez, Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, Jon Sobrino theologians "in our day"? Why does a critical review not make mention of this absence?

Finally, as a long-time eyewitness of the situation in Nicaragua, I was distressed to read in the editorial, "The Planet Speaks," that "The United States has ceased its funding of the *contras*," when at this moment such a bill has passed the Senate and is awaiting the judgment of the House. Also, in a land where over 60 percent of production is in private hands, and both private and state cooperatives function on a democratic basis with workers owning or sharing democratically in management, how can it be said that "the Sandinistas seem hell bent on centralization of the means of production?"

LOUISA D. KIRCHNER

A stunted Jesus

San Antonio, Tex.

To the Editors: The book, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, and, I hope, the movie, drives home the point that Jesus was fully human, subject to all our fears and temptations. George L. Scheper in "Jesus Wrestles with God" [September 9] made that point very clearly. The basic problem, however, is that Kazantzakis portrays Jesus at the end of his public ministry as just beginning an intimate personal relationship with the Father.

All who have a deep commitment to the Lord have come to the realization that to continue with him will mean a radical

THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

ENCOUNTER SERIES, Volume 8

Richard John Neuhaus, General Editor

"The **Encounter Series** *will contribute greatly to our understanding of the part that faith plays in the continuing American experiment."*

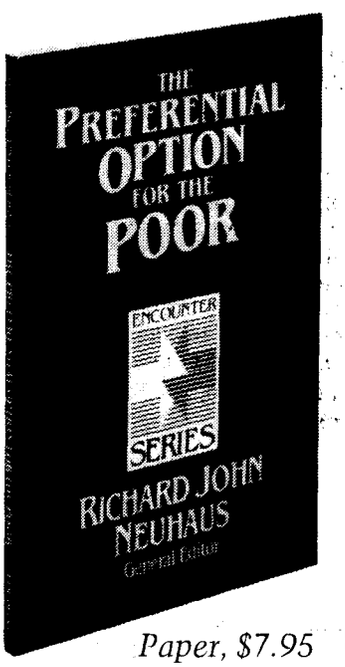
—GEORGE GALLUP, JR.

ENCOUNTER SERIES

Arising out of conferences sponsored by the Rockford Institute Center on Religion and Society in New York City, the *Encounter Series* presents the dialogue of a diverse group of theologians, ethicists, philosophers, and public policy experts from across the political and religious spectrum.

This volume analyzes a phrase that is often used today by religious activists and theologians, "the preferential option for the poor." It attempts to uncover, discover, and assess the various and sometimes contradictory meanings of the preferential option.

Essays in this volume are by Max L. Stackhouse, Dennis P. McCann, Robert Benne, and Gilbert Meilaender. The story of the encounter is by David Heim.



At your bookstore, or call 1-800-633-9326

831 WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.

255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. 49503

Paper, $7.95

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

departure from a normal, world-centered life. Usually that occurs over a period of time, as our love and understanding of his majesty increase. But there comes a point where we realize that there really is no choice for us anymore, a time when God is so near, and has touched us so deeply, that we know life without him is impossible. Then the temptation of a normal, world-centered life is meaningless, and really no longer a temptation at all. The temptations then are of a very different sort.

ANA M. NOVOA

CLASSIFIED

RATES: 80¢ a word, one time; 76¢ three times; 72¢ six times; Classified payable with order; monthly in advance for more than three times. COMMONWEAL, 15 Dutch St., NYC 10038.

Mary's Pence

Mary's Pence, a channel to redirect our resources directly to those with the least power in our church and society. P.O. Box 29078, Chicago, Ill. 60629-9078, 312-767-1677.

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)

Philosopher, editor of the scientific works of Goethe for the Kuerschner and Weimar editions, and leading exponent of the Western esoteric tradition left the world over 350 volumes of his complete works. He founded the Waldorf Schools, established the anthroposophical extension of medicine and biodynamic agriculture, inaugurated a unique school of architecture and inspired the Camphill Villages for special individuals. Free catalog of over 150 volumes. Anthroposophic Press, Suite 26, Star Route, Hudson, N.Y. 12534, (518) 851-2054.

Jamaican Aid

On September 13, Hurricane Gilbert ripped through Jamaica, leaving one quarter of the population homeless—some 500,000 people—and a death toll still undetermined. Food for the Poor, a Christian relief agency serving the Caribbean countries, primarily Haiti and Jamaica (see *Commonweal* December 26, 1986), is standing ready to send emergency supplies. Monetary donations may be sent to: Food for the Poor; Jamaican Hurricane Relief Dept. 1219; 1301 W. Copans Road; Pompano Beach, FL 33064.

Church Needed

Priest working for Mother Teresa's Sisters and his parish needs church, rectory etc. Please help: Rev T. McKessack, S.J., 28A Gold Mohar Avenue, Chittaranjan 713331 W.B., India.

Books

The Bishop's Bounty cookbook, 500 recipes and book on "Reverend Charles Greco," the founder of St. Mary's Training School for retarded children. Send $17.45 ppd. Proceeds go toward educating retarded children. BYBY, Dept. AK, P.O. Box 4633, Dublin, Ga. 31040.

Employment Opportunity

DIRECTOR: Central American refugee Organization; Buffalo, N.Y. Ecumenical. General relief efforts; direct services. Small staff. Experience, Spanish desired. Faith commitment, flexibility required. Salary negotiable. Information/applications: Sister Paula Notarthomas, 716-838- 4125.

Priesthood

DESIRE PRIESTHOOD? Committed? Call 1-800-633-2252. Father Nigro, Gonzaga University, Spokane 99258.

Novel

Wanted: Publisher for novel about women in the Roman Catholic church. Easy read; pulls no punches. Will appeal to Church liberals, feminists, anyone interested in women's issues. No vanity presses. E. Cresmer, 205 Third Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10003 Apt. 2P

Thomas Merton

Living Prayer devotes November-December, 1988 issue to Merton. Essays by: Archbishop Weakland, Patrick Hart, David Cooper, Bonnie Thurston, Patrick O'Connell, Wayne Teasdale, Cornelia Jessey, Irving Sussman, Mitch and Kathy Finley. Order from LP, Dept. C, RR 2 Box 4784, Barre, Vt./ 05641. $4.00 issue, prepaid, includes postage and handling.

Lost Tribes

New insight into the "Ten Lost Tribes" of Israel. Order "The Stick of Ephraim", $7 postpaid from Luck/Cerno, 20 Ridgeway, Easton, Ct. 06612.

Books

Theology/Religion Booklist. Send SASE. CTOSO, P.O. Box 2833, Garden Grove, Ca. 92642.

Boston College

Boston College's Institute of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry seeks Assistant Director of Academic Affairs for position available June 1, 1989. Reporting to the Director, will be responsible for the implementation of policy and administration of all matters which pertain to the academic life of the Institute during the academic and summer sessions. Requires knowledge of and commitment to the pastoral and ecumenical dimensions of the Catholic tradition of theology and ministry, several years' experience in academic administration, an advanced degree in theology, religious education or related pastoral discipline. Doctorate preferred. Boston College is a Jesuit University encompassing the College of Arts and Sciences, the Schools of Management, Law, Social Work, Nursing, the Graduate Schools of Arts and Sciences and the Evening College. Boston College offers competitive salary and comprehensive benefits including tuition program for employee, spouse and children. To apply, send cover letter and resumé by December 1, 1988 to Richard Jefferson, Employment Manager, Dept. of Human Resources, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Ma. 02167. An equal opportunity/ Affirmative Action Employer.

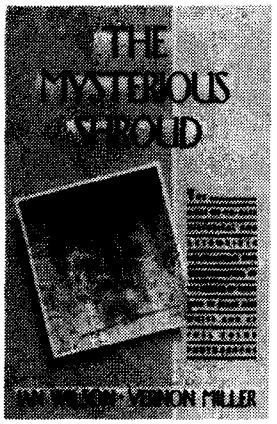
Receptionist & Assistant to the Editors

The Commonweal office is in need of a new receptionist and assistant to the editors. Varied and interesting work includes usual receptionist responsibilities: answering phones, sorting mail, greeting visitors; plus assisting editors with manuscripts, books, author contact, and maintaining news clip and correspondence files. Good typing skills; computer experience a plus. Four-day work week, pleasant office in lower Manhattan, good health insurance plan. Equal opportunity employer.

Letter and resume to:
Edward Skillin, Commonweal, 15 Dutch Street, New York, New York 10038.
Phone: 212-732-0800.

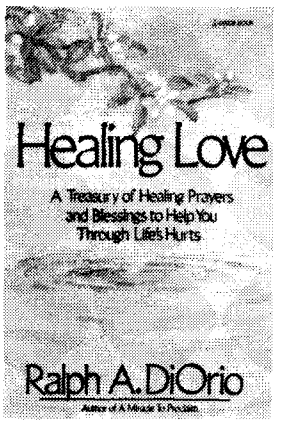
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WORDS that inspire, IMAGES that last



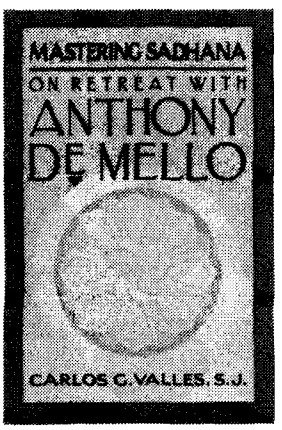
THE MYSTERIOUS SHROUD
Ian Wilson
Photographs by Vernon Miller

Myth or miracle, the Shroud of Turin has captivated the imagination of the faithful everywhere. This lavishly illustrated, authoritative report of the latest scientific examinations is "as gripping and fascinating a mystery story as you are likely to encounter."—*The Tablet*
$9.95



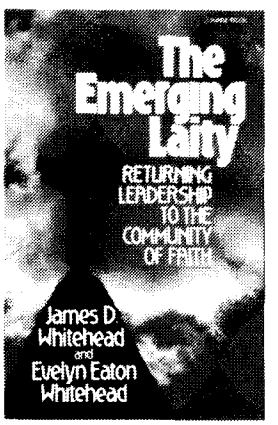
HEALING LOVE
A Treasury of Healing Prayers and Blessings
Ralph A DiOro

Prayers for anyone in need of comfort, in times of emotional, psychological, physical, or spiritual pain. With his special gift for reaching deep into the heart, Fr. DiOro has become "the most important figure in charismatic healing since the late Kathryn Kuhlman."—*Fate*
$7.95



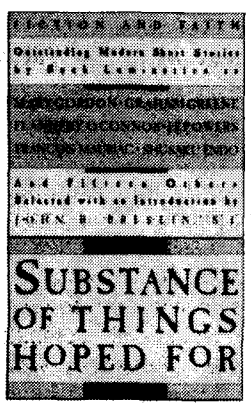
MASTERING SADHANA
On Retreat with Anthony de Mello
Carlos G. Valles, S.J.

Experience the challenge and renewal of a retreat led by one of our era's most gifted spiritual teachers. Drawing on transcripts of Anthony de Mello's actual words and his own careful notes, Fr. Valles shows how his mentor guided thousands to inner freedom, peace, and awareness.
$7.95



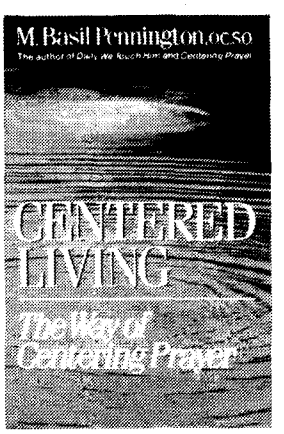
THE EMERGING LAITY
Returning Leadership to the Community of Faith
James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead

Combining a wealth of knowledge both scholarly and practical, James and Evelyn Whitehead share exciting insights into the shape and direction of ministry in the contemporary Church. "An illuminating vision of leadership returning once again to the grass roots."—*Catholic Sun*
$8.95



THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR
Fiction and Faith: Outstanding Modern Short Stories
Selected and with an Introduction by John B. Breslin, S.J.

Mary Gordon, Flannery O'Connor, Josephine Jacobsen, and J. F. Powers are among the writers included in this "amazingly rich anthology." *(Washington Post)* "Breslin reminds you that fine writers of this stamp...are fierce and playful allies of the Holy Spirit."
—*Commonweal*
$8.95



CENTERED LIVING
The Way of Centering Prayer
M. Basil Pennington, O.C.S.O

In this enriching book, Fr. Pennington reveals how the spiritual insights of "centering" have profoundly changed the lives of contemporary Christians. He provides both guidelines for those who already practice centered prayer and an absorbing introduction for those just discovering it.
$8.95

One faith, many images
Image Books/Doubleday

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Recent Books on South Africa . . . from EERDMANS

TUTU *Voice of the Voiceless*
Shirley du Boulay

"This timely, readable biography integrates Tutu's personal story with a strong sense of what it is like to live under apartheid. . . . Through apt quotation, du Boulay communicates the charisma that comes from Tutu's faith, passion, humor, and ebullience."
Cloth, $22.50 —BOOKLIST

THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY IN CONTEXT AND CRISIS
A South African Perspective
John W. de Gruchy
Foreword by Martin Marty

"A major theological study of ministry contextualized within the realities of the present South African situation." —MISSIOLOGY

"Considers the ministry of word and sacrament out of the pain and uncertainty of South Africa."
Paper, $9.95 —THE DISCIPLE

CHALLENGE TO APARTHEID
Toward a Moral National Resistance
Mokgethi Motlhabi

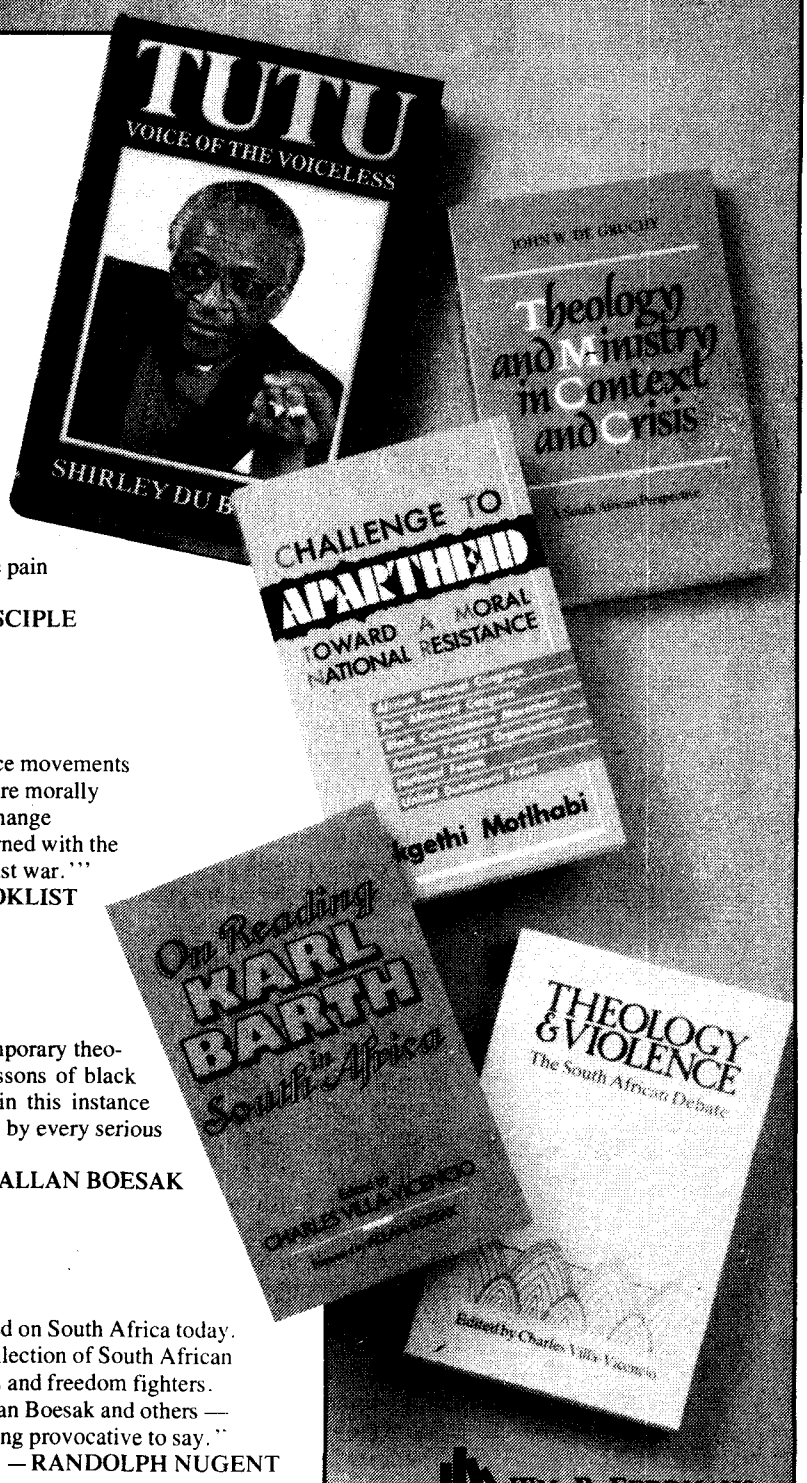
"Analyzes the theology and practice of the main resistance movements in South Africa and then evaluates whether their actions are morally justified. . . . The nondoctrinaire discussion of whether change can be achieved by nonviolence will interest many concerned with the South African struggle and the moral implications of a 'just war.'"
Paper, $13.95 —BOOKLIST

ON READING KARL BARTH IN SOUTH AFRICA
Edited by Charles Villa-Vicencio

"[This volume] constitutes a bold new step in the contemporary theological debate. The contributors use the insights and lessons of black and liberation theology to reread traditional theology, in this instance Karl Barth's theology. . . . These essays ought to be read by every serious student of theology around the world."
Paper, $14.95 —ALLAN BOESAK

THEOLOGY AND VIOLENCE
The South African Debate
Edited by Charles Villa-Vicencio

"An indispensable volume for any who would be informed on South Africa today. Charles Villa-Vicencio has brought together a brilliant collection of South African thinkers, black and white, lay and clergy, radical pacifists and freedom fighters. There are well known persons like Desmond Tutu and Allan Boesak and others — academics and activists — less familiar. All have something provocative to say."
Paper, $12.95 —RANDOLPH NUGENT



At your bookstore, or call 1-800-633-9326

WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. 49503

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED